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Triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the programme evaluation of the United Nations Environment Programme

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

The report is submitted in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations three years after taking decisions on evaluations submitted to the Committee (see A/37/38, para. 362). The triennial review determines whether the five recommendations emanating from the programme evaluation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), all of which were endorsed by the Committee, have been implemented and assesses the extent to which their implementation has contributed to programme changes.

OIOS determined that one of its recommendations had been implemented, three had been partially implemented and one was pending implementation in 2016. OIOS also noted early indications of specific positive outcomes resulting from the recommendations that UNEP had fully or partially implemented. Lastly, OIOS identified reasons for the partial or non-implementation by UNEP of four recommendations.

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Under recommendation 1, UNEP was called upon to create a mechanism whereby partners could share feedback on their collaboration with the Programme and instructed to assess the relative cost-efficiency of its partnerships, which at the time were significantly increasing in number. UNEP was not successful in implementing either of those actions, owing to staffing changes in the organizational units responsible for the recommendation. The recommendation has therefore not been implemented. UNEP has agreed to act on it in 2016.

Under recommendation 2, UNEP was advised to develop a database to track requests for its capacity-building assistance and to use the data to develop a strategic plan for its capacity-building services. Until March 2015, UNEP was taking specific steps to create that database. The process subsequently stalled, however, owing to staff turnover and misunderstandings over ownership of the initiative. Consequently, the database has not yet been created. UNEP nevertheless reported taking other action to enhance its strategy for delivering capacity-building services. The recommendation has therefore been partially implemented. OIOS will consider it fully implemented once UNEP has completed and begun to use the planned database.

Recommendation 3 was focused on the need for UNEP to strengthen its regional offices. UNEP has actively endeavoured to implement the recommendation. Steps included the issuance a draft operational guidance note and a policy entitled "Strengthened UNEP strategic regional presence: contributing to the future we want"; the revision of reporting lines so that regional directors now report directly to the Deputy Executive Director; the conversion of the posts of Regional Director and some regional office staff to posts funded by the regular budget, in addition to the provision of additional regional office staff; the inclusion of the regional offices' perspectives in the project review committee through revised terms of reference for the committee; and the increased inclusion of the regional offices in the development of the medium-term strategy and programme of work. OIOS noted specific preliminary results occurring as a result of the changes and will consider the recommendation fully implemented once an operational guidance note, currently in draft form, has been approved. The recommendation has therefore been partially implemented.

Under recommendation 4, a call was made for the establishment of clear and transparent criteria for allocating resources to activities in the thematic priority areas. UNEP made progress towards that goal by adopting a results-based budgeting approach in its programme of work for 2018-2019 and clearly articulating a new method for apportioning resources on the basis of expected outcomes rather than increases or decreases being made formulaically over the previous budget's baseline. Thematic, programme-based criteria are now being used to allocate the resources, and subprogramme coordinators are advising on funding needs. Progress remains needed in the allocation of resources from the Environment Fund (a core source of unrestricted funds for UNEP) to subprogrammatic activities. However, the allocations continue to be made at the discretion of the relevant division director, and neither set criteria nor transparent processes exist for doing so. The recommendation has therefore been partially implemented. OIOS encourages UNEP to deepen its initial efforts to use results-based criteria and more transparent processes for allocating resources, by ensuring that financial resources for thematic activities are also allocated according to results-based principles.

Recommendation 5 was focused on the role of the subprogramme coordinators through the finalization of their terms of reference. The role has been consolidated, clarified and strengthened, in particular since mid-2014, when new, full-time coordinators at the P-5 level were hired. The result, according to UNEP, has been enhanced institutional coordination, a stronger link between projects and institutional objectives and reduced conflict of interest between the needs of divisions and of thematic subprogrammes. The recommendation has therefore been implemented.

The steps that UNEP has taken to date in response to the OIOS recommendations have the potential to contribute to a strengthened regional presence and a more robust focus on outcomes in its seven priority thematic areas. UNEP should renew its commitment to implementing the recommendations in their entirety.

I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-third session, in 2013, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the programme evaluation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (E/AC.51/2013/2). The Committee recognized that UNEP had achieved positive results in addressing a broad range of environmental issues, that it had been a critical force in the development of global environmental norms and standards and that it had achieved positive results in building the capacity of national Governments. It noted the efforts under way to strengthen UNEP and the role of the Programme in promoting the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system. In that regard, the Committee stressed the importance of promoting a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, in addition to coordination within the United Nations system. The Committee also welcomed the efforts by UNEP to strengthen its capacity-building support services in line with the needs and priorities of member States. The Committee endorsed the five OIOS recommendations (see A/68/16, para. 167).

2. The present report is issued pursuant to a triennial review of the recommendations. It provides an examination of the current status of implementation of the recommendations. The objective is to report on the extent of implementation of the recommendations and whether, and if so, to what extent, such implementation has contributed to programme changes.

3. The methodology for the triennial review included:

(a) Review and analysis of biennial progress reports on the status of recommendations that are monitored through the OIOS Issue Track database;

(b) Analysis of relevant information, documents and reports obtained from UNEP;

(c) Interviews in person or by telephone of a purposive sample of 20 UNEP senior management and programme staff.

4. The present report incorporates comments received from UNEP during the drafting process. A final draft was shared with UNEP, which provided final comments (see annex). OIOS expresses its appreciation for the cooperation extended by UNEP in the drafting of the present report.

II. Results

5. UNEP is mandated to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment, as set out in paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want" (General Assembly resolution 66/288), Assembly resolution 67/213 and Governing Council decision

27/2. The mandate has evolved with subsequent decisions of the Council (renamed the United Nations Environment Assembly in 2013 in resolution 67/251).[1]

6. The recommendations emanating from the OIOS evaluation addressed various aspects of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of UNEP in executing its mandate. At the conclusion of its fifty-third session, the Committee endorsed all five recommendations made by OIOS.

7. The triennial review determined that one recommendation had been implemented, three had been partially implemented and one was pending implementation in 2016. There is some indication of specific positive outcomes where UNEP has acted on the recommendations. The implementation status of the recommendations is discussed below.

Recommendation 1
Create a feedback mechanism for partners and assess the cost-efficiency of the Programme's increased number of partners

8. Recommendation 1 reads as follows:

> UNEP should address the partnership gaps identified in the evaluation, taking into account progress made in the partnership policy. Specifically, it should:
>
> (a) Seek regular and systematic feedback from all partners with which it works on individual projects through the use of a standardized feedback mechanism. UNEP should analyse the responses to distil lessons learned regarding the strengths and weaknesses of its partnership procedures so as to strengthen them;
>
> (b) Implement a mechanism for monitoring partnership cost-efficiency.

9. The recommendation addressed the work that UNEP undertakes with its partners. Partnership is a central fixture of the UNEP strategy in the fulfilment of its mandate, as UNEP highlighted in its medium-term strategy for 2014-2017, stating that "the business model employed by UNEP in pursuit of its planned results is to work through partnerships" (UNEP/GC.27/9, para. 3).

10. OIOS observed that, "given its relatively small size, limited resources and sparse country presence, partnerships have been essential for UNEP to enhance its effectiveness ... By partnering with other United Nations entities with a field presence, UNEP gained access to country-based offices and specialized sector expertise". It also observed that "country-based partners have provided UNEP with access to local knowledge and networks". It noted that the number of partnerships had increased significantly in a relatively short period (21 partners in the period 2008-2010, compared with 70 in the period October 2011-March 2012, or 233 per cent), while the average budget per partner had fallen by 20 per cent. At the same time, partners interviewed for the evaluation identified challenges and risks in the

[1] See also General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), adopted in 1972; the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme, adopted by the Governing Council in its decision 19/11 in 1997; Council decision SS.VII/1, on international environmental governance, and its appendix, known together as the "Cartagena package", adopted in 2004; the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, adopted by the Council in section I of its decision 23/1 in 2004; and decision 27/2, adopted by the Council in 2013.

partnership model, such as short project time frames, the cumbersome nature of partnership processes and the need for better and more regular two-way communication (E/AC.51/2013/2, paras. 26-28 and 30).

11. UNEP acknowledged that it had not been successful in implementing the recommendation, but reported making some general improvements to the way in which it managed its partnerships and assessed its partners. They included the implementation of a revised partnership policy and procedures (approved in 2011) and, in parallel, an adapted web-based partnership portal that gathered information and internal feedback midway through a partnership project. The processes were continuing to be refined at the time of the triennial review.

12. UNEP also reported that it intended to undertake a comprehensive study of its partnerships in the middle of 2016, which would inform the development of a partnership strategy to position UNEP as the partner of choice of Governments, United Nations system entities and civil society organizations in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The study would also explore the risks and opportunities associated with working in partnerships, administrative and financial mechanisms for mitigating risks and optimally designing and implementing partnerships. Lastly, the exercise would provide clarity about how UNEP could:

(a) Devise a more corporate (i.e., UNEP-wide) approach that would help to identify partnership opportunities, as well as initiate, structure, administer, manage, monitor and report on partnerships with clear criteria and guidelines, and support technical staff to implement the programme of work;

(b) Build on past experiences working in partnerships to identify corporate financial and administrative support structures that would facilitate the creation and optimal functioning of partnerships and identify and mitigate risks associated with working in partnerships;

(c) Learn from its partners how to improve its own effectiveness and efficiency as a partner.

13. UNEP contended that the study might also include an examination of the issues raised in the OIOS evaluation.

14. While UNEP has taken steps to improve its partnership function, thus far it has not taken steps to address the substance of the recommendation, which referred to the creation of a feedback mechanism for partners and a mechanism for monitoring the overall cost-efficiency of the growing number of partnerships. Accordingly, the recommendation has not yet been implemented. UNEP has agreed to act on it in 2016, however. UNEP should begin taking steps to do so, either by incorporating the steps into the initiatives that it has already planned, or through new initiatives as necessary.

Recommendation 2
Create a database to track requests for capacity-building assistance

15. Recommendation 2 reads as follows:

> UNEP should develop a strategy for enhancing its capacity-building function. Specifically, it should:

(a) Develop a database to track the number and type of requests for assistance that it receives from member States and other stakeholders;

(b) Using the data from that database, develop a strategic plan for budgeting for and programming capacity-building services based on evidence-based decision-making.

16. The recommendation was focused on UNEP work on capacity-building, with a specific appeal to develop a database to track requests for assistance and, going forward, to utilize the data as the basis for developing a strategic plan for its capacity-building services. According to UNEP, it took action to develop a database in response to the recommendation. By early 2015, it had created the specifications for a country requests database, which was to be included in its country programming and reporting module. According to those specifications, UNEP did not at the time have a single, consolidated platform where it could see, analyse and respond to all the requests coming from countries. The country requests database would address such a need by defining and supporting a process to systematically capture those requests. UNEP provided documentation that the database's design was based on the concept that, once requests were received, the Regional Support Office would mobilize the regional directors to use the system to capture all requests coming to their attention. The regional directors would then mobilize the coordinators of the subprogrammes relevant to each specific request.

17. UNEP reported, however, that, since the creation of the specifications, work on the database had stalled. Consequently, the database does not yet exist. UNEP reported that staffing changes, coupled with other urgent information technology needs (including the adoption of Umoja), had slowed progress in implementation. Other challenges included a lack of clarity concerning which organizational unit within UNEP was the business owner of the database and difficulty in establishing a practical workflow for the requests system. Given that the database does not exist, UNEP was unable to undertake the second part of the recommendation relating to its use for analysis and strategic planning for improved capacity-building services.

18. UNEP reported other efforts and improvements to its strategic approach to capacity-building, including ensuring an enhanced evidence-based approach to its decision-making. In that regard, it reported that, in the development of its medium-term strategy for 2018-2021 and programme of work for 2018-2019, it had conducted extensive consultations with member States, through its regional offices, to identify key priority areas for assistance. While the value of that process is recognized, as reflected in annex I to the medium-term strategy, in which those priorities are described by region, they are general priorities rather than particular requests for assistance, as mentioned in the recommendation.

19. In addition, UNEP reported that it had progressively integrated the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building into its strategies and work planning.

20. UNEP also referred to its Programme Information Management System, an internal technology tool launched in 2009 that gathers information on and tracks all its projects, which includes or has the potential to include a function indicating which projects have a capacity-building dimension. While that initiative is noted, that function (or, more accurately, that potential function) does not address the

substance of the recommendation, which is specifically focused on improving the UNEP response to requests for assistance.

21. During its evaluation, UNEP invited OIOS to consider a database that it had created in 2006 and that had briefly been in use before being discontinued, which was a clearing-house mechanism for the Bali Strategic Plan and South-South cooperation. UNEP reported that, while that website and database initiative included a function to track requests for assistance, it was not being used by countries requesting capacity-building-related assistance and had subsequently been abandoned in favour of a stronger internal platform for monitoring projects: the Programme Information Management System. As indicated above, however, the Programme Information Management System does not include a function to track requests for assistance. The platform created in 2006 is therefore no longer relevant to the recommendation, given that it was created (and discontinued) long before the date of the OIOS recommendation.

22. While acknowledging the numerous capacity-building efforts made by UNEP, the recommendation has been only partially implemented. For the recommendation to be considered implemented, UNEP should clarify the business owner of the country requests database and move forward with its creation and adoption. Furthermore, there should be a clear mechanism by which data from the database would feed into strategic planning for budgeting for and programming capacity-building services.

Recommendation 3
Strengthen regional offices

23. Recommendation 3 reads as follows:

> UNEP should further strengthen its regional offices. Specifically, it should:
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> (a) Provide regular opportunities for regional office directors to meet the senior management team;
>
> (b) Give regional offices a stronger voice in the project formulation process;
>
> (c) Strengthen cooperation between the Division of Regional Cooperation, the regional offices and divisions;
>
> (d) Further clarify the responsibilities and functions of regional offices and make adjustments in financial and human resources accordingly;
>
> (e) Improve interdivisional cooperation for regional delivery to support regional offices.

24. The recommendation addressed the need for UNEP to strengthen its regional offices in several areas. OIOS noted the following:

> Collaboration between the regional offices and headquarters has not been optimal and the integration of a regional perspective into UNEP work and regular knowledge transfer from the field to headquarters has not been achieved. This has been noted as a primary challenge for project implementation. Activities have been undertaken at the country level by headquarters divisions without regional office involvement. Weak collaboration has resulted in part from a lack of shared understanding regarding the UNEP regional and global work programmes and activities.

25. It also noted that the regional offices were characterized by unclear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines and were often consulted at too late a stage in the project approval process (E/AC.51/2013/2, paras. 41-42).

26. Over the past three years, UNEP has undertaken several reforms to strengthen its regional offices, in order to bring its normative and scientific work into greater alignment with national, subregional and regional priorities and to make operational the reference to strengthening the UNEP regional presence in paragraph 88 (g) of "The future we want". For example, it has accorded priority to regional office staff for conversion to regular budget posts; all 21 posts approved for conversion by the General Assembly in December 2015 are for regional offices (see resolution 70/247). They include regionally based subprogramme coordinators who will enhance UNEP engagement on thematic issues. In addition, UNEP has opened five subregional offices since 2014. Lastly, it has restructured the relationship of its regional offices with the rest of the Programme: in 2013, the offices sat within the Division of Regional Cooperation and the regional directors reported to its head. As part of strengthening the role of the regional directors and enhancing the regional offices, the Division of Regional Cooperation was dissolved in October 2013 and succeeded by the leaner Regional Support Office, which engages with the regional offices and headquarters in Nairobi with a view to more coherently delivering the UNEP mandate for a strategic regional presence. The regional directors and the Director of the Office report to the Deputy Executive Director, who convenes a monthly videoconference with the regional directors on strategic issues of relevance to the Programme, including the programme of work and engagement with member States. Division directors and other senior headquarters staff are invited to attend the meetings as appropriate.

27. UNEP has also made further strides with regard to other specific aspects of the recommendation. In terms of providing regional directors with more opportunities to meet the senior management team (subpara. (a) of the recommendation), opportunities have not increased in the sense of frequent, formal meetings with the entire team; such contact remains infrequent (roughly annually). There are, however, more frequent contacts with individual members of the team. Given the structural changes within UNEP, it is unclear whether that aspect of the recommendation is as relevant now as it was three years previously, given that the regional directors now report directly to the Deputy Executive Director and speak freely with the directors of other divisions. Senior management team members with whom the regional directors are most often in contact, in particular the Director of the Regional Support Office, should continue to include the regional directors in team meetings. Such an approach should include the systematic and timely sharing of meeting agendas and meeting notes with them, so that they can react and provide advice accordingly.

28. For the project formulation process (subpara. (b) of the recommendation), the revised terms of reference for the project review committee (as at 1 July 2015) have ensured that regional offices are systematically consulted on every project before it is approved. They are sent a standard set of questions about the suitability of a project, contextualized to their region, and their feedback is discussed during committee meetings. That positive step should be continued, specifically by ensuring that the offices are consulted at the project design stage rather than merely at the approval stage. OIOS determined that consultation at the design stage had increased, but remained uneven. Early consultation should be the norm rather than

the exception, given that feedback provided in the final stages of an approvals process can be more difficult to integrate and is more likely to be ignored when timelines are short.

29. In relation to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the regional offices and strengthening cooperation between the Division of Regional Cooperation, the regional offices and divisions (subparas. (c) and (d) of the recommendation), in June 2015 UNEP issued a policy entitled "Strengthened UNEP strategic regional presence: contributing to the future we want". Both the policy and the related draft operational guidance note (August 2015) address issues raised in the OIOS evaluation, but the policy outlines the principles and key steps that UNEP is implementing to strengthen its strategic regional presence. The draft guidance note specifies how the policy will be and is being implemented. In particular, it clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the regional offices and their staff, including regional directors, with regard to issues such as strategic planning, the development of programme frameworks, project management from the design to the implementation stages and accountability. It also clarifies roles in decisions on partnerships, resource mobilization and communication. Critically, it clarifies issues relating to reporting lines, delegation of authority and decisions over staffing and recruitment and resource allocation, among others.

30. The draft guidance note is an important document that will contribute to enhancing the work of the regional offices and headquarters in strengthening the strategic regional presence of UNEP. UNEP reported that the draft was undergoing an extensive internal consultation and revision process. The process has been long, owing to the number of diverse views on issues such as staff selection and reporting, project implementation and budgets. UNEP noted that the Deputy Executive Director had convened a meeting to discuss the draft in March 2016 with the aim of approving it.

31. UNEP has also undertaken improvements in cooperation between the regional offices and other parts of the Programme (subpara. (e) of the recommendation). According to UNEP, cooperation was manifested in the process of developing the most recent medium-term strategy (2018-2021) and programme of work (2018-2019). For example, the regional offices were asked to conduct visioning exercises to feed into strategy development. The exercises included extensive internal and external consultations with counterparts in the region, including member States. In the past, such documents had been written at headquarters and drafts offered to the offices for comment. Another means by which cooperation has improved is through the addition of regional development, humanitarian and subprogramme coordinators in regional offices. UNEP noted that those changes, in addition to the changes in organizational structure mentioned above (e.g., the dissolution of the Division of Regional Cooperation and new reporting lines to the Deputy Executive Director), had resulted in an organizational culture that was less divided into silos than it had been three years previously. That said, interviewees noted that cooperation with other divisions sometimes still depended on the interest and willingness of a given individual and that some divisions worked in a greater spirit of cooperation than others. UNEP should deepen progress in that area by taking steps to ensure that timely and adequate consultation and cooperation become the norm across all divisions and regional offices.

32. With regard to the outcomes of those initiatives, the numerous changes were noted in interviews as resulting in some strengthening of the regional offices in relation to other actors internally. There is enhanced collaboration and a stronger sense of a two-way street with other parts of the institution. Interviewees could not yet identify higher-level outcomes resulting from the internal improvements (i.e., in the form of improved delivery of the programme of work), although it is plausible that the progress, if continued, could result in improved responses to regional priorities and requests for assistance.

33. While recognizing the progress that UNEP has made, OIOS determines that the recommendation remains partially implemented. For it to be considered fully implemented, UNEP should take the steps necessary for the approval and implementation of the draft operational guidance note so that the efforts undertaken thus far in strengthening its regional offices are not for nothing.

Recommendation 4
Establish clear and transparent criteria for allocating resources to activities in the thematic priority areas

34. Recommendation 4 reads as follows:

> UNEP should establish clear and transparent criteria for allocating resources (human and financial) to activities in the thematic priority areas.

35. The recommendation was related to UNEP budgeting and resource allocations. It has been partially implemented for the programme of work for 2018-2019 by a pair of unprecedented initiatives within UNEP: budgeting being undertaken on a results-based basis, specifically for allocating funds for posts, and the advice of subprogramme coordinators being solicited, and generally accepted, with regard to loosely restricted extrabudgetary funds.

36. In its evaluation (E/AC.51/2013/2, para. 52), OIOS noted the following:

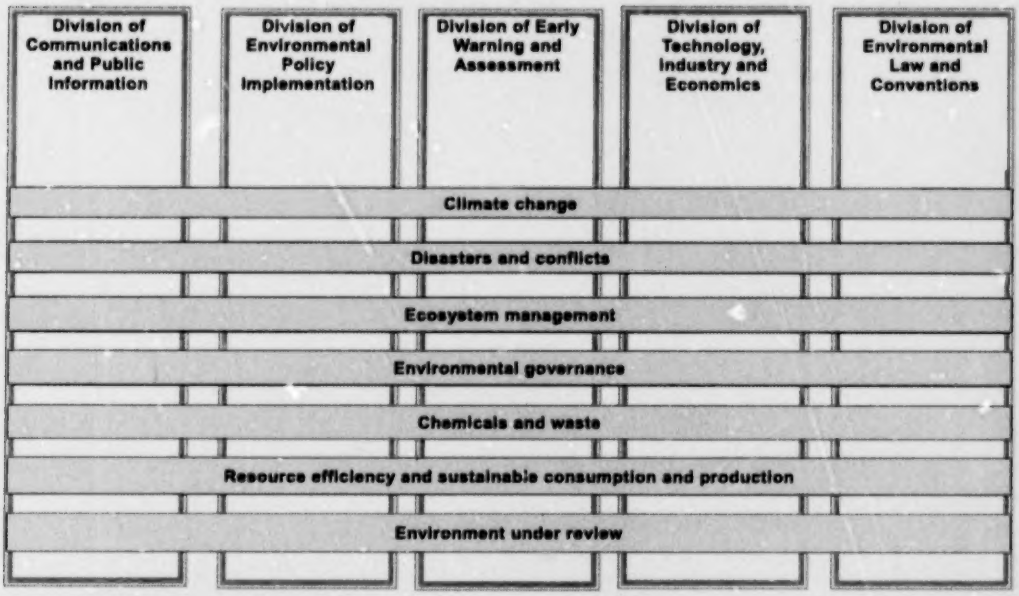
> The issue previously identified by OIOS [in its 2009 audit report AA2009/220/01] and the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network regarding a lack of transparent criteria for allocating funding across activities was also identified in this evaluation. This has created discernible tension among units and branches in the Programme. The UNEP task team found that some divisions had been allocated Environment Fund resources under subprogrammes where they had no outputs to deliver, whereas others were expected to deliver outputs but had not been allocated Fund resources.

37. With regard to the positive shift towards results-based budgeting in the allocation of funds for posts, the proposed budget for the biennium 2018-2019 articulated a new method for allocating resources, with allocations now based on expected outcomes, rather than increases or decreases being made formulaically over the previous budget's baseline. Moreover, UNEP reported that it had trained some 400 staff members in results-based budgeting.

38. This is an important step, given that an internal evaluation of the UNEP programme of work for 2010-2011 (cited by OIOS) highlighted the fact that budgeting continued to map on to the pre-matrix structure of UNEP: i.e., following

the divisional structure rather than the thematic subprogramme structure.[2] The figure below provides a visual overview of how the UNEP division-based structure overlaps with its subprogramme-based thematic focus areas. By contrast, according to the proposed programme of work and budget for 2018-2019, the first step that UNEP took in its results-based budgeting approach was to carry out a "review of alignment of existing staffing to the subprogrammes based on the staff workload", which meant that "UNEP did not use 2014-2015 or 2016-2017 budget figures as a reference but created a new baseline based on the work that staff members currently have to do against each subprogramme" (UNEP/EA.2/16, para. 19). A bottom-up approach was taken, whereby subprogramme coordinators worked extensively with all divisions to identify staff who would work on particular outputs and outcomes.

Matrix of divisions and subprogrammes


Division of Communications and Public Information
Division of Environmental Policy Implementation
Division of Early Warning and Assessment
Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
Division of Environmental Law and Conventions
Climate change
Disasters and conflicts
Ecosystem management
Environmental governance
Chemicals and waste
Resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production
Environment under review

Source: UNEP organization chart, 2015.

39. UNEP has taken other steps to enhance the transparency of allocations to the thematic priority areas. It reported having set up a finance and budget committee to make decisions on allocations relating to corporate projects; previously, those decisions would have been taken bilaterally. It has also used a transparent process to explain the rationale for the allocation of the above-mentioned 21 regular budget posts approved by the General Assembly in 2015.

40. With regard specifically to allocations to the thematic areas, there has been mixed progress. As to allocations of loosely restricted extrabudgetary funds, some 5 per cent of total extrabudgetary funding, interviews suggested that thematic programme-based criteria were being used to allocate resources and subprogramme coordinators were advising on funding needs.

[2] Formative evaluation of the UNEP programme of work 2010-2011 carried out by the UNEP Evaluation Office in 2011, paras. 30-31 and 203-206.

41. By contrast, interviewees noted that the allocation of Environment Fund funding to subprogramme activities remained discretionary and was not based on clear criteria or necessarily done transparently. The funds for each of the seven thematic areas are not centralized, but rather are broken apart and distributed by the divisions and the Regional Support Office (not, for example, by the subprogramme coordinators). Once the divisions and the Office receive their annual allocations, there is latitude in making decisions: directors may decide to allocate fewer or greater resources to subprogramme activities and need not consult or offer justifications for those decisions. While in many cases, coordinators do work closely with directors to advise on allocations that align with the programme of work, in others, coordinators may face challenges in ascertaining the allocation for their subprogramme in any particular division. Consequently, there have been cases in which divisions with allocations towards subprogramme activities (and expected accomplishments based on those activities) did not actually allocate those funds to the expected subprogramme. Many examples of those funding gaps for subprogramme activities surfaced in interviews across the Programme.

42. The recommendation has been partially implemented, given the discretionary approach taken in the allocation of loosely restricted extrabudgetary funds. UNEP noted that the final decision rested with the Executive Director, and that the division directors allocated within their divisions and should take into account advice from subprogramme coordinators. For the recommendation to be considered fully implemented, UNEP should extend its efforts to promote and communicate criteria-based, transparent decision-making processes, ensuring that results-based principles are applied to all allocation decisions. This extends to Environment Fund allocations at the division and regional levels.

Recommendation 5
Implement and review terms of reference for subprogramme coordinators

43. Recommendation 5 reads as follows:

> UNEP should finalize and implement the September 2012 draft terms of reference for subprogramme coordinators and, after one year, review the results of the implementation of those terms of reference and make adjustments as needed.

44. The recommendation pertained to the subprogramme coordinators and their overall objectives. UNEP finalized terms of reference for the coordinators, and a full complement of seven full-time coordinators was put in place in mid-2014. Any review of terms of reference has been periodic, with some adjustments made.

45. UNEP formally adopted a matrix structure in its medium-term strategy for 2010-2013 by adding six thematic priority areas cutting across its existing functional divisions and regional offices (see figure above). A seventh area, "Environment under review", was introduced in the programme of work for 2014-2015. In 2013, many of the subprogrammes had part-time coordinators, and each reported to the head of the functional division responsible for leading their particular subprogramme. That approach embodied the potential for conflicts of interest around issues of resource allocation and reporting on results (for example, the "lead" division for the chemicals and waste subprogramme is the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics). The OIOS evaluation and the formative

evaluation conducted by UNEP in 2011[3] indicated that those roles were too weak to effectively influence programme alignment within the thematic lines. Moreover, they were marginalized in critical decision-making processes, given that they were more junior in level than the division heads to whom they reported, and they were unable to make programmatic suggestions to the donor, the European Commission. Lastly, the introduction of the cross-cutting subprogrammes had created a complex web of lead and managing divisions with roles and responsibilities that were continuing to evolve.

46. In response to concerns raised by OIOS, the UNEP internal evaluation unit and the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network, UNEP took several steps. In addition to finalizing the terms of reference, it revised reporting lines, such that subprogramme coordinators would have as their first reporting officer the person in charge of the newly created programme strategy and planning team, with the lead division director as the second reporting officer. That structure was intended to reduce conflicts of interest, while maintaining working relationships with the functional divisions. Meanwhile, the role of coordinator was elevated to the P-5 level. The new reporting lines were integrated into revised terms of reference (dated July 2014), recruitment processes for the coordinators began and most of the coordinators were in place by mid-2014.

47. The implementation of the new roles has also addressed some of the concerns previously raised. The coordinators play critical roles in the medium-term strategy, programme of work and programme framework processes, ensuring a new degree of thematic coherence among and enhanced quality of the outputs. They also play an important role in ensuring the coherence and organizational fit of new projects, given that they review all project proposals in their subprogramme areas at an early stage. The new reporting lines have reportedly reduced conflicts of interest, and the programme frameworks now clearly identify the lead division on each project, thereby reducing confusion as to responsibilities. In addition, coordinators now interact directly with the European Commission, preparing meeting agendas and making programmatic suggestions.

48. While the coordinators have no budgetary authority, their recommendations for allocating budgets and aligning them with the programme frameworks were reported to be generally accepted by the lead division directors (who retain budgetary decision-making authority for the subprogrammes), with some exceptions. In the most recent programme of work, for 2018-2019, coordinators played a key role in aligning the budget with the actual people working on the subprogramme, an improvement over past iterations. Coordinators also give advice on allocations of loosely restricted extrabudgetary funds, in alignment with the programme of work and specific funding gaps. That said, there were no formal criteria for allocating those funds according to resource gaps and project performance.

49. Some challenges remain with those new roles in terms of budgeting, including that the coordinators lack a dedicated budget to perform their functions, which may include travel and convening. The budgets are made only at the discretion of the division director. Another challenge is that there remains some lack of understanding organizationally about the coordinator's responsibilities and level of

[3] Ibid., paras. 27-28 and 220-226.

authority (for example, the fact that coordinators are not part of the programme strategy and planning team or part of the Office for Operations and Corporate Services and/or the Quality Assurance Section). Coordinators have also faced challenges in gaining access to consolidated financial information on their subprogrammes because the information could not be displayed by subprogramme. There is an expectation that Umoja will assist in that regard in the near future, and positive strides have been made. Moreover, challenges remain with regard to resource mobilization. The role of the regional offices in mobilizing resources for projects being implemented in their regions remains an issue of contention, and a recent OIOS audit indicated that coordinators might not have clear strategies to mobilize resources needed for projects contributing to thematic outcomes.[4] Coordinators and the programme strategy and planning team were taking steps to develop resource mobilization strategies.

50. Lastly, as mentioned above, coordinators do not generally hold authority in terms of resource allocation within the subprogrammes; it is reserved for the division directors. Directors are not required to consult coordinators on their decision-making process, although they often do. Some coordinators may face challenges in ascertaining their allocation. Furthermore, as indicated above with regard to the regional offices, the level of cooperation and buy-in may depend on the particular division director.

51. The recommendation included a request for UNEP to formally review the implementation of the terms of reference after one year. While that has not been done, the programme strategy and planning team periodically reviews important issues. That procedure was considered sufficient in addressing the substance of the recommendation. UNEP reviewed the terms of reference with division directors in November 2014, just after the coordinators were put in place, to reiterate roles and responsibilities. The meeting included clarification of the role of coordinators in resource mobilization efforts. Further discussions have been held with the programme strategy and planning team on issues such as the possibility of obtaining dedicated resources and (potentially) assistance from interns.

52. Given that the new coordinator roles have been in existence for less than two years, the outcomes of the changes remain internal and organizational in nature and have not yet manifested themselves in the achievement of results by UNEP. They include a more strategic allocation of resources, as well as improved and more inclusive planning processes and documents, such as the medium-term strategy, the programme of work and programme frameworks. New reporting lines have led to a reduction in conflicts of interest around allocations of resources according to thematic priorities rather than divisional priorities, in addition to enhanced impartiality in reporting on results (including less fear of reporting underperformance).

53. The recommendation has been implemented. UNEP should continue periodic reviews of the terms of reference, consider ensuring that coordinators have access to resources that enable them to fulfil their roles, look at the issue of levels of cooperation among divisions and continue to work on systems to display and manage financial data by subprogrammatic area.

[4] Audit of the UNEP chemicals and waste subprogramme, OIOS report No. 2015/188 (22 December 2015), paras. 15-18.

III. Conclusion

54. UNEP is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. The steps that it has taken to date in response to the OIOS recommendations have the potential to contribute to a strengthened regional presence and a more robust focus on outcomes in its seven priority thematic areas. Further steps, if taken, will improve its partnership and capacity-building functions, both of which are critical to achieving the UNEP mission. The action taken by UNEP thus far is commendable, but it should renew its commitment to implementing the recommendations in their entirety.

(*Signed*) Heidi **Mendoza**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services
23 March 2016

Annex*

Comments received from the United Nations Environment Programme

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) welcomes the triennial review conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to determine the extent to which the five recommendations emanating from the OIOS programme evaluation of UNEP have been implemented. UNEP also appreciates the value of the recommendations made by OIOS previously, which have resulted in concrete positive outcomes.

This review has come at a crucial time. UNEP has, together with the Secretariat, implemented a new enterprise resource planning system (Umoja) and has just completed its first results-based budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

UNEP appreciates the value of its partnerships with member States, other stakeholders and entities within the United Nations system, which are key to catalysing transformational change and leveraging its impact. UNEP strives to remain customer-focused and relevant to these partners. UNEP recognizes that, in order to do so, it must allow the partners to provide feedback on its performance and effectiveness. UNEP has identified the best methods to collect this feedback and intends to adapt existing systems, in 2016, to allow partners to provide such feedback. UNEP also plans to undertake a comprehensive study of its partnership modalities, which could take up the cost-efficiency issue raised in the OIOS evaluation.

The consolidation, clarification and strengthening of the role of the subprogramme coordinators through the finalization of their terms of reference was an intensive process, and UNEP appreciates the OIOS closure of recommendation 5. UNEP takes the enhancement of efficiency very seriously and is happy to see that the work done in this regard was valued and puts the organization on track for results-based management.

UNEP has bolstered its strategic approach to capacity-building, including ensuring an enhanced evidence-based approach to its decision-making. In this regard, UNEP conducted extensive consultations with member States through its regional offices, in order to identify key priority areas for assistance, of which OIOS has recognized the value. UNEP notes the OIOS recommendation for the creation of a database to track capacity-building assistance, however, it feels that such a database would create expectations on the part of member States and stakeholders that may not be possible to meet within existing resources. At the same time, the organization recognizes the merit of the recommendation from OIOS and, in order to maximize value for money, is considering using existing systems to try to capture these requests from member States, which would also allow UNEP to then collate information at the country level and conduct analyses and reviews. UNEP has already developed in its systems the ability for countries to see where UNEP is providing services (see http://uneplive.unep.org/theme/index/11). This system could provide a cost-effective opportunity to capture requests from member States.

* In the present annex, the Office of Internal Oversight Services presents the full text of comments of the United Nations Environment Programme. This practice has been instituted in line with General Assembly resolution 64/263, following the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee.

UNEP concurs with the recommendation to strengthen its regional offices. The organization has undertaken reforms over the past three years to address this recommendation. This included the strengthening of the role of the regional directors and strengthened regional delivery of the UNEP programme of work. In addition, in June 2015 UNEP issued its policy, entitled "Strengthened UNEP strategic regional presence: contributing to the future we want". Both the policy and a draft operational guidance note address a number of issues raised in the OIOS evaluation. The draft operational guidance note is being finalized for further consideration and approval by the end of April 2016. In December 2015, the General Assembly approved the conversion of 21 posts, which will serve to strengthen the regional offices' ability to deliver their regional mandates and scale up UNEP support to countries through key partnerships.

UNEP thanks OIOS for its recognition of its change in approach towards budgeting. The results-based budgeting process adopted by UNEP in the preparation of the programme of work and budget for 2018-2019 was based on establishing a budget driven by the outcomes that UNEP targets in its programme of work. UNEP acknowledges the need to strengthen the resource allocation process, which would complement its results-based budgeting approach to the programme of work. UNEP intends to use elements identified through results-based budgeting to enhance resource allocation criteria along the same model.

As previously noted, UNEP has already begun to see some positive outcomes from its implementing the recommendations by OIOS, in particular with regard to enhancing the regional offices. UNEP appreciates the quality of the OIOS review. UNEP recognizes that, while the review validates the progress that UNEP has made thus far, there is room for further strengthening of some of its processes. As illustrated above, work is already under way to refine UNEP practices, and the report's conclusions will be instrumental in adopting further measures to improve its effectiveness.

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Programme questions: evaluation

Triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the programme evaluation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations three years after taking decisions on evaluations submitted to the Committee (see A/37/38, para. 362). The triennial review determines the extent to which the five recommendations emanating from the OIOS programme evaluation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have been implemented.

The OIOS evaluation recommendations addressed various aspects of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of OCHA in executing its mandate. At the conclusion of its fifty-third session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination recommended that the General Assembly take note of the OIOS evaluation report. The present triennial review determined that all five recommendations had been implemented. There were also early indications of concrete positive outcomes resulting from the implementation of the recommendations by OCHA.

* E/AC.56/2016/1.

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Recommendation 1 focuses on clarifying and articulating roles and responsibilities in the emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction work of OCHA, both within the programme itself and in relation to the many other humanitarian partners with which it coordinates. OCHA has implemented both the internal and external dimensions of this recommendation. Internally, it has conducted an evaluation to clarify its broad organizational niche in this area and to define roles and responsibilities across its individual organizational units. Externally, OCHA has worked within the context of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience to develop the Common Framework for Preparedness, which was endorsed by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the United Nations Development Group in 2013. There have been preliminary indications of the Common Framework's positive outcomes.

Recommendation 2 addressed the need for OCHA to establish a senior surge deployment mechanism, so as to maximize the timeliness and effectiveness of its response at the immediate onset of an emergency. OCHA implemented this recommendation in 2013 through a combination of initiatives within the programme and in conjunction with its inter-agency partners. All of these mechanisms were reported to have yielded positive results, enhancing the ability of OCHA to quickly mobilize staff of the appropriate technical and leadership calibre to respond to level 3 emergencies. The Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism was seen as providing a clear shared commitment to, and common understanding of, surge deployment needs for level 3 emergencies among Inter-Agency Standing Committee member organizations.

Recommendation 3 addressed the leadership role of OCHA in coordinating the assessment by the humanitarian system of its collective effectiveness in implementing the transformative agenda, the chief humanitarian policy reform initiative undertaken during the period covered by the OIOS evaluation. To implement this recommendation, OCHA spearheaded the establishment of mechanisms for monitoring implementation of the transformative agenda, for collecting relevant data at the country level and for prompting collective action in response to the information received at the country level. OCHA chose not to undertake one optional action suggested under recommendation 3, namely, the completion of an inter-agency evaluation of the transformative agenda, but noted that it had led or supported multiple inter-agency reviews. OCHA claimed that these actions had adequately addressed the main thrust of the recommendation. With a further wave of reform likely to result from the World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in May 2016, however, the aspect of the recommendation associated with inter-agency evaluation has taken on heightened importance as an opportunity for the humanitarian system to learn from the past so as to better shape its collective future.

Recommendation 4 focused on the need for OCHA, as the steward of major financing vehicles for the humanitarian system, to strengthen performance monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanisms. To implement this recommendation, OCHA issued an overarching framework for country-based pooled funds in 2015, thereby removing the distinction between emergency response funds and common humanitarian funds, and subsequently a policy instruction and an operational handbook for country-based pooled funds. It also rolled out other tools, such as the Grants Management System, a web-based platform and mandatory tool for the management of the entire grant life cycle for all country-based pooled funds in 2014; a Performance Accountability Framework; and numerous initiatives to

support the Framework. OCHA has also provided standard messaging to Central Emergency Response Fund recipient agencies, in the Emergency Relief Coordinator's formal allocation communication to them, concerning their responsibilities with respect to sharing information with the humanitarian coordinator/resident coordinator. All of these actions were viewed as having led to positive change — for example, through streamlined processes, clearer guidance and expectations, and strengthened performance reporting.

Recommendation 5 addressed the need for OCHA to work more closely with its partners to improve the modalities for undertaking joint inter-agency evaluations. To implement the recommendation, OCHA proposed and, together with its inter-agency evaluation partners, developed a new modality for these evaluations: the inter-agency humanitarian evaluation. The concept was discussed and agreed to by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in 2013, and guidelines were developed by the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group in 2014. These guidelines provide a set of standard operating procedures for inter-agency humanitarian evaluation (including triggers, timelines and procedures), methodological approaches, and governance and management arrangements. The guidelines have been utilized in a series of evaluations of humanitarian action to date and, based on lessons learned and good practices emerging from these initial cases, their refinement is planned for 2016. Progress by OCHA on this front was viewed as positive, but concerns were raised over its sustainability, as the OCHA evaluation function continued to be underresourced and lacked sufficient independence within the programme to fulfil its critical role in leading inter-agency evaluations.

While some of these initiatives were under consideration at the time of the OIOS evaluation, key interviewees underlined that the recommendations had provided impetus for further progress. Although a range of positive outcomes has resulted from the implementation of the recommendations, sustained attention will be necessary if measureable longer-term impact is to be achieved.

I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-third session, in 2013, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the programme evaluation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (E/AC.51/2013/3).

2. The Committee underscored the important work carried out by OCHA in its coordination of humanitarian responses, its fundraising for and management of humanitarian response funds and its provision of support to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, in particular in the implementation of the transformative agenda.[1] The Committee recommended that the General Assembly take note of the OIOS evaluation report (A/68/16, para. 182).

3. The present report is issued pursuant to a triennial review of the recommendations. It examines the current status of implementation of the five recommendations contained in the report, as well as whether the implementation of the recommendations has contributed to programme changes, and, if so, to what extent.

4. The methodology for the triennial review included:

(a) Review and analysis of biennial progress reports on the status of recommendations, which are monitored through the OIOS Issue Track database;

(b) Analysis of relevant information, documents and reports obtained from OCHA on various topics related to the recommendations;

(c) Interviews conducted in person or by telephone of a purposive sample of 35 senior managers and programme staff, both within OCHA and among its partners.

5. The report incorporates comments received from OCHA during the drafting process. A final draft was shared with OCHA, which provided final comments (see annex). OIOS expresses its appreciation for the cooperation extended by OCHA in the drafting of the present report, and for the time and insights provided by its Inter-Agency Standing Committee partners.

II. Results

6. The mandate of OCHA is to ensure the timely, coherent, coordinated and principled response of the international community to disasters and emergencies and to facilitate the transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and sustainable development (see A/70/6 (Sect. 27), para. 27.1). The five recommendations emanating from the OIOS evaluation addressed various aspects of the relevance effectiveness and efficiency of OCHA in executing its mandate.

7. All five recommendations have been implemented, and there is some evidence of concrete positive outcomes resulting from this. The implementation status of each of the five recommendations is discussed below.

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[1] The transformative agenda consists of a set of concrete actions to transform the way in which the humanitarian community responds to emergencies. It focuses on improving the timeliness and effectiveness of its collective response through stronger leadership, more effective coordination structures and improved accountability. For further information, see https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda.

Recommendation 1
Clarifying and articulating the roles and responsibilities in preparedness and disaster risk reduction work

8. Recommendation 1 reads as follows:

> OCHA should work closely with partners in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and its secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme, in particular, as well as the United Nations Development Group, to further clarify and articulate respective roles and responsibilities among OCHA and its partners in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee involved in preparedness and disaster risk reduction work.

9. This recommendation addressed the work of OCHA on preparedness and disaster risk reduction. OCHA implemented the recommendation in two ways. First, it undertook an internal evaluation, finalized just prior to the issuance of the OIOS evaluation report in 2013, which sought to assess the past and current preparedness efforts of OCHA at the global, regional and country levels and to identify lessons learned and good practices. The internal evaluation also recommended adjustments and corrections to how OCHA exercises its roles and responsibilities in this area. One recommendation specifically addressed the need for a higher-level policy statement in consultation with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other Inter-Agency Standing Committee partners on the role of OCHA in preparedness.

10. Secondly, taking into account the findings and recommendations of the internal evaluation, OCHA worked within the context of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, through its Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience,[2] to create a common framework for improved capacity development for emergency preparedness. This initiative resulted in the issuance of the Common Framework for Preparedness, which was endorsed by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the United Nations Development Group in 2013.[3] The Common Framework was disseminated to humanitarian coordinators and resident coordinators in 2014.

11. The Common Framework builds upon the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction definition of preparedness. It also supports the development of preparedness capacity in a more coherent manner, outlining a systematic country-level approach in which the inter-agency humanitarian system collectively assesses capacity and need and uses this assessment to plan appropriately. To that end, the Common Framework outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of all actors, prescribing a systematic approach in which humanitarian and development actors combine their efforts at the country level to jointly support the development of national and local capacity for emergency preparedness, response and recovery. It

[2] The Task Team was established by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to implement the preparedness and resilience priorities in 2014 and 2015. It was co-chaired by the World Food Programme and the United Nations Development Programme, with the secretariat provided by OCHA. With the reorganization of the subsidiary bodies of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the Task Team on Preparedness and Resilience will be discontinued. Successor bodies will implement the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Working Group priorities for 2016-2017.

[3] Available from https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/common_framework_for_preparedness.pdf.

specifically stipulates that resident coordinators will lead and coordinate the response preparedness efforts of United Nations country team members and relevant humanitarian actors in support of national efforts. It further stipulates that humanitarian coordinators, for their part, will lead efforts to improve the response preparedness capacity of national and local authorities and their capacity for working with international organizations.

12. According to OCHA, the Common Framework builds on previous disaster risk reduction efforts, helping to bring all relevant actors together to harmonize their understanding of key concepts, clarify roles and responsibilities and undertake needs assessment, planning and capacity-building activities in conjunction with national authorities. With just over two years since the issuance of the Common Framework, it was premature at the time of the triennial review to measure higher-level outcomes (e.g., improved needs assessments, increased preparedness and disaster risk reduction capacity among national and local authorities) or longer-term impact (e.g., improved response and recovery resulting from enhanced capacity) emanating from these enhancements. A review of its shorter-term effects, however, indicated that common disaster risk management plans had been developed based on the Common Framework initiative, whereas key stakeholders underlined that, in the past, organizations undertook these efforts separately in an uncoordinated fashion. The Task Team for Preparedness and Resilience planned further efforts to disseminate the Common Framework and ensure its implementation in 2015-2016.

13. Recommendation 1 has been implemented. To maximize the longer-term, system-wide impact of this endeavour, OCHA should actively participate in efforts to disseminate and implement the Common Framework further and, together with its Inter-Agency Standing Committee partners, to monitor such dissemination and implementation.

Recommendation 2
Establishing a senior surge deployment mechanism

14. Recommendation 2 reads as follows:

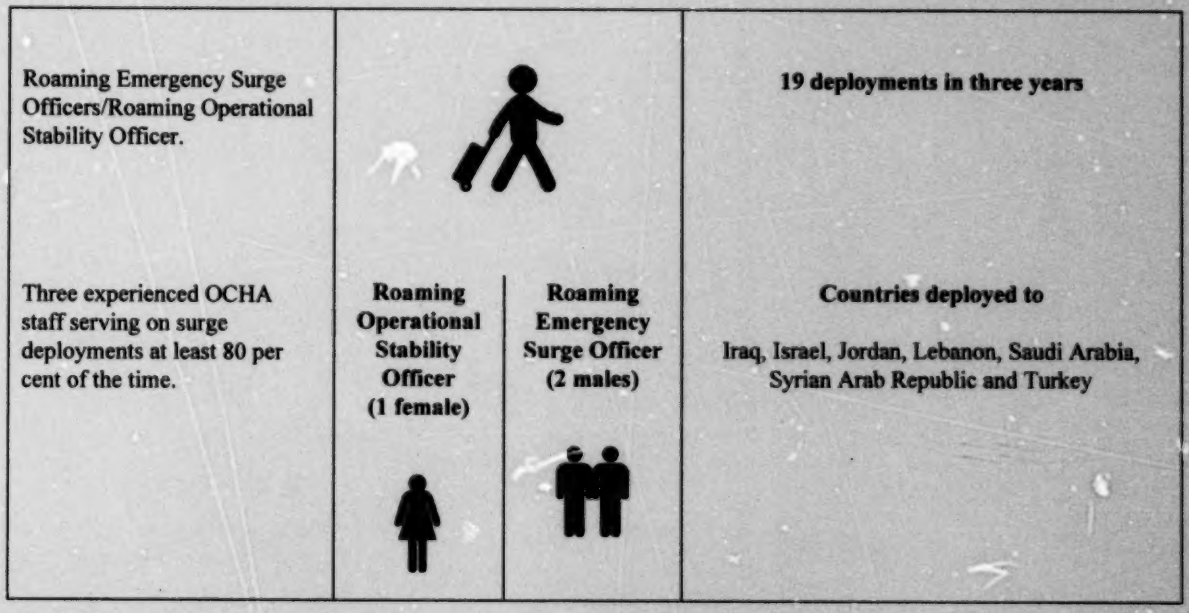
> OCHA should ensure that appropriately senior and technically competent leadership resources are available for prompt deployment to the field, and sustained during humanitarian crises, especially for major emergencies.

15. OCHA plays a central role in coordinating the humanitarian system, both at the country level and at the global level. This recommendation addressed the need for OCHA to establish a senior-level rapid deployment mechanism, so as to maximize the timeliness and effectiveness of its on-the-ground coordination role at the immediate onset of an emergency. A particular focus in this recommendation was the ability of OCHA to ensure that it had sufficient human resources that it could swiftly deploy to either an OCHA corporate emergency or a level 3 emergency, the highest-level emergency as defined by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.[4]

[4] Level 3 emergencies are emergencies in which the scale, complexity, urgency, response capacity and reputational risks are such that a significant corporate-level inter-agency response across the humanitarian system is warranted (see "Humanitarian system-wide emergency activation: definitions and procedures" (transformative agenda reference document PR/1204/4078/7)), Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 13 April 2012.

16. OCHA implemented this recommendation in 2013 through a series of initiatives, both within the programme itself and together with its inter-agency partners. First, it recruited three senior roaming officers — two Roaming Emergency Surge Officers at the P-5 level and one Roaming Operations Stability Officer at the P-4 level. These officers are deployed for up to three months at the immediate onset of an emergency to provide leadership and stability to OCHA operations. Roaming Emergency Surge Officers take the lead in physically establishing offices, while Roaming Operations Stability Officers provide general operational support to an OCHA office. It was originally envisaged that the officers' time would be divided, such that they would spend 80 per cent of their time in the field and 20 per cent at OCHA offices in Geneva or New York. When not deployed to the field, the officers would work with the Surge Staff Development Team to develop and deliver training and to support lesson-learning and other exercises to improve the OCHA emergency response. As shown in figure 1, senior roaming officers have been deployed frequently since their recruitment in 2013.[5]

Figure I
Deployment of senior roaming officers, 2013-2015


Roaming Emergency Surge Officers/Roaming Operational Stability Officer.
19 deployments in three years
Three experienced OCHA staff serving on surge deployments at least 80 per cent of the time.
Roaming Operational Stability Officer (1 female)
Roaming Emergency Surge Officer (2 males)
Countries deployed to
Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey

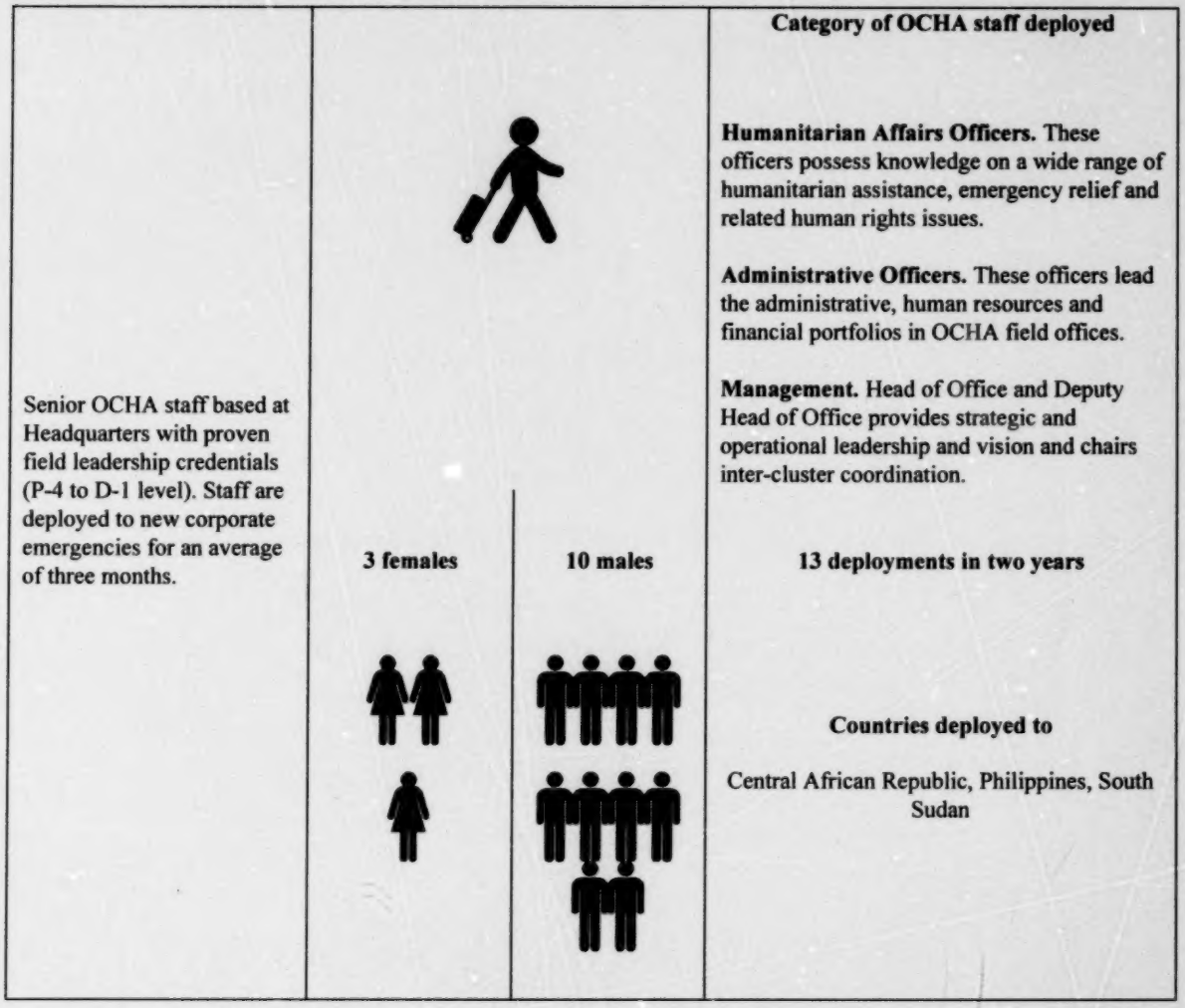
Source: OIOS compilation of OCHA data.

17. Another initiative OCHA undertook internally was the creation of the senior surge roster, which it introduced in July 2013. The roster focused on existing senior-level OCHA staff (P-4 to D-1) based at Headquarters who had proven field leadership credentials, along with key staff from regional offices who could

[5] The Roaming Emergency Surge Officers were recruited on 1 January and 1 March 2013; the Roaming Operational Stability Officer was recruited on 1 September 2013. Although the earliest of these recruitments predates the issuance of the OIOS final report, OCHA had the draft report in hand before the deployments.

temporarily leave their main OCHA post (i.e., for up to three months) and deploy to the field to address surge needs for level 3 or corporate emergencies. Data on senior surge roster deployments are provided in figure II.

Figure II
Senior surge roster deployments in 2013 and 2014


Category of OCHA staff deployed
Humanitarian Affairs Officers. These officers possess knowledge on a wide range of humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and related human rights issues.
Administrative Officers. These officers lead the administrative, human resources and financial portfolios in OCHA field offices.
Management. Head of Office and Deputy Head of Office provides strategic and operational leadership and vision and chairs inter-cluster coordination.
Senior OCHA staff based at Headquarters with proven field leadership credentials (P-4 to D-1 level). Staff are deployed to new corporate emergencies for an average of three months.
3 females
10 males
13 deployments in two years
Countries deployed to
Central African Republic, Philippines, South Sudan

Source: OIOS compilation of OCHA data.

18. According to OCHA, the use of the senior surge roster stopped in late 2014, when it was observed that the supply of qualified staff it could swiftly deploy to new or escalating emergencies had not kept pace with field needs. This shortage became particularly acute in 2013 and 2014, when numerous level 3 emergencies occurred simultaneously and the number of senior staff and the ratio of Headquarters-based staff to field-based staff had declined. There was therefore not enough Headquarters staff to draw upon during this time. Accordingly, OCHA

introduced a revised concept — optimizing surge mechanisms — to address those challenges and put forward a larger and more diverse surge pool including in its emergency response roster. The Senior Management Team is currently reviewing this concept. OCHA also noted other mechanisms it had strengthened to fulfil its surge capacity needs, namely, the associate surge pool and stand-by partnerships.[6]

19. In addition to these internal initiatives within OCHA, its response to the OIOS recommendation extended to the inter-agency level. On 10 December 2013, members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee addressed the need to ensure readily available human resources for rapid deployment for a level 3 emergency through the establishment of the Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism. The Mechanism aims to ensure that agencies have the requisite standby capacity on hand, in keeping with their individual cluster lead agency roles and other coordination responsibilities, to enable them to deploy in a timely fashion. Deployments through the Mechanism serve to ensure a coordinated and coherent response to a system-wide activation in a level 3 emergency.

20. According to OCHA, its own internal mechanisms (i.e., the senior surge roster and the senior roaming officers) resulted in positive outcomes, facilitating faster deployment of senior staff with the technical skills to respond effectively to level 3 emergencies. The potential for longer-term impact was also seen as plausible, given that deployments were quick and sustained and that they provided the required level of leadership and technical competency.[7] In its evaluation, OIOS had noted that the short duration of deployments to large-scale, sudden-onset emergencies had hampered the ability of OCHA to be timely, effective and relevant. The deployment data after 2013 indicated that staff members had been deployed for long durations to the pressing emergency situations at the time; senior surge roster deployments averaged 70 days and senior roaming officers averaged 99 days.[8] Similarly, the Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism was viewed as a beneficial mechanism that had provided a clear commitment and common understanding on surge deployment for level 3 emergencies. However, as the Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism is an inter-agency modality, an assessment of deployments by Inter-Agency Standing Committee members fell outside the scope of the present review.

21. Recommendation 2 has been implemented. Looking ahead, OCHA should ensure that the optimizing surge mechanism concept is considered in a timely manner and that, subsequent to the deliberations of the Senior Management Team, it is finalized promptly.

[6] See http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/surge-capacity/resources.

[7] OIOS noted that the earliest deployments of Roaming Emergency Surge Officers predated the issuance of its final evaluation report. However, OCHA had the draft report of OIOS in hand before these deployments. In interviews for the present triennial review, key OCHA programme managers and staff clarified that, whereas the concept was not entirely new, the OIOS recommendation provided the impetus, as well as the financial means, to better institutionalize it.

[8] Calculations are based on deployment data maintained by OCHA for these two mechanisms.

Recommendation 3
Leading efforts to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the transformative agenda

22. Recommendation 3 reads as follows:

> As part of the implementation of the transformative agenda of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, OCHA should take a leadership role in developing a proposal to assess its effectiveness. This should include a periodic reporting system that can be utilized to track the accomplishment of the mutual accountability goal within the transformative agenda and may include an inter-agency evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of the transformative agenda.

23. This recommendation addressed the leadership role of OCHA in coordinating the assessment by the humanitarian system of its collective effectiveness in implementing the transformative agenda. Devised and implemented under the umbrella of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the transformative agenda aimed at strengthening three pillars of the humanitarian system: leadership, accountability and coordination. It represented the chief humanitarian reform initiative undertaken during the period covered by the OIOS evaluation.

24. OCHA implemented this recommendation through a series of tools for collecting data on the progress on the implementation of the transformative agenda, with the aim of facilitating stock-taking at both the collective humanitarian country team level and at the individual humanitarian coordinator/resident coordinator level. At the humanitarian country team level, a framework for measuring success at the country level, which was endorsed by the Emergency Directors Group in June 2013, has been used. Using data provided by inter-agency transformative agenda focal points, this tool monitored implementation by the humanitarian country teams of the three pillars of the transformative agenda. It provided success benchmarks, key elements and objectively verifiable indicators for measurement. These provisions and indicators have also been integrated into the reporting formats for OCHA country offices.

25. At the humanitarian coordinator/resident coordinator level, OCHA strengthened accountability frameworks to include performance compacts between the humanitarian coordinator and the Emergency Relief Coordinator. OCHA reported 84 per cent compliance in 2015 and 100 per cent compliance in 2014 in the signature of these compacts. The appraisal by the Emergency Relief Coordinator of the humanitarian coordinator, as well as input based on consultations with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (i.e., through the Emergency Directors Group) were channelled into the annual United Nations Development Group performance appraisals of resident coordinators. It was also reported that appraisals were used to identify underperformance, with ongoing operational support and guidance being provided through monthly telephone calls.

26. In addition to these tools, the response by OCHA to the OIOS recommendation has extended to the inter-agency level. It has primarily undertaken action on this level through the Emergency Directors Group, established in 2013, which OCHA chairs and to which it provides secretariat support. The Emergency Directors Group is comprised of Emergency Directors of Inter-Agency Standing Committee

members, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and observers.[9] The Group's purpose is to support humanitarian operations by advising the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee principals on operational issues of strategic concern and by mobilizing agency resources to address operational challenges and gaps, in support of the humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian country teams.

27. The Emergency Directors Group supports humanitarian operations and meets regularly in fulfilment of its responsibilities, one of which includes supporting and monitoring its membership's progress in implementing the transformative agenda and monitoring the development and roll-out of improved tools and services to help its members to implement the transformative agenda. Of particular note were the semi-annual meetings of the Emergency Directors Group with donors, which had a general thematic focus on transformative agenda implementation. As background to those meetings, the Group produced a paper on learning lessons in the implementation of the transformative agenda, coupled with an implementation tracking matrix. In preparation for the annual review of operations, "snapshots" of each country operation were produced, with a focus on key data points to highlight areas of progress, potential weaknesses and areas where individual parts of the system might not be adequately invested.

28. The Emergency Directors Group has also provided support in operational contexts through dedicated missions to both protracted situations, such as those in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and early warning challenges, such as that in the Central African Republic. Support was also provided remotely through videoconferences or telephone conferences to optimize the response in a number of countries to situations that had become increasingly complex.

29. The Emergency Directors Group also established the Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team to support the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in implementing the transformative agenda at the country level. The Team seeks to improve the understanding and knowledge of the transformative agenda and its related tools and to strengthen tailor-made applications in specific humanitarian contexts. This role was undertaken through field missions, remote support and webinars. The Team provided a tool for monitoring the implementation of the transformative agenda and a mechanism for providing feedback to the Emergency Directors Group for action; however, the Team is itself a tool for direct support to strengthen progress in the field under the pillars of the transformative agenda.[10]

30. According to OCHA, its actions with respect to the OIOS recommendation have provided ongoing information on the progress of implementation of the transformative agenda, allowing for a better-informed assessment of such progress

[9] Under the terms of reference of the Emergency Directors Group, endorsed in March 2013, participation in the Group is limited to the Emergency Directors (D-1 or equivalent) of Inter-Agency Standing Committee members, plus one resource person. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are invited to nominate their Emergency Directors for participation as observers. The three NGO consortia (the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response and InterAction) nominate two operational NGOs from their membership, for ongoing participation in the Group.

[10] See https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/topics/transformative-agenda.

and, by extension, more strongly data-informed decision-making that has helped improve operational support and facilitate course correction. OIOS documented the tools and mechanisms to facilitate improved inter-agency decision-making, as well as a handful of examples in which the membership of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee used these tools for enhanced decision-making.[11] However, given time constraints and data availability, it was not possible to systematically catalogue evidence of widespread, systemic improvement. Nor was it possible, through documentary or perceptual evidence, to assign direct attribution to OCHA for any of the key areas of progress cited above.

31. OCHA chose not to undertake one optional action OIOS had suggested it consider under recommendation 3, namely the conduct of an inter-agency evaluation of the transformative agenda. OCHA declined to implement this aspect of the recommendation, claiming that the actions described above had adequately addressed the main thrust of the recommendation.

32. Recommendation 3 has been implemented. At the same time, with the World Humanitarian Summit scheduled for May 2016, OCHA should consider whether an evaluation of the implementation of the transformative agenda — or a similar stocktaking exercise — might still be in order. Given the wave of reform likely to ensue on the heels of the Summit, such an evaluation might serve to help the humanitarian system — and in particular OCHA, given its crucial system-wide coordination role — to critically reflect on and learn from the past, so as to chart a better-informed course in the future.

Recommendation 4
Strengthening performance reporting and evaluation of the emergency response funds, common humanitarian funds and the Central Emergency Response Fund

33. Recommendation 4 reads as follows:

> OCHA should work with the humanitarian coordinators and/or resident coordinators and recipient organizations to further strengthen performance reporting and evaluation on the emergency response funds, common humanitarian funds and the Central Emergency Response Fund. This should include establishing, where not already present, monitoring and evaluation frameworks for each of the country-level pooled funds and working to ensure that OCHA and recipient organizations will dedicate sufficient resources for monitoring and evaluation. OCHA should further clarify the role and responsibilities of the managing agent in relation to monitoring and evaluation of the common humanitarian funds. Finally, specific indicators to monitor the performance of the emergency response funds, common humanitarian funds and the Central Emergency Response Fund should be included in the progress report developed in the context of transformative agenda reporting.

34. This recommendation addressed the aspect of the OCHA mandate related to its role in raising appeals and managing pooled humanitarian funds. The Central

[11] The Emergency Directors Group undertakes OCHA-supported reviews of progress achieved and lessons learned under the transformative agenda, on a biannual basis; Inter-Agency Standing Committee operational peer reviews; and inter-agency humanitarian evaluations, which, inter alia, assess the progress of the transformative agenda in response to level 3 emergencies. The Group also commissioned an external review, which synthesized numerous reviews of the transformative agenda.

Emergency Response Fund is a central funding mechanism managed by a secretariat based in New York. The emergency response funds and common humanitarian funds are pooled funds at the country level (termed "country-based pooled funds") under the overall management and oversight of the humanitarian coordinator, with significant day-to-day management by OCHA. UNDP serves as managing agent of four of the five common humanitarian funds.[12] In addition, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office of UNDP serves as administrative agent, managing contributions and channelling funds to United Nations agencies for all common humanitarian funds.[13]

35. These humanitarian financing vehicles are a vital means for funding humanitarian action. Donor contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund, emergency response funds and common humanitarian funds from 2013 to 2015 (i.e., the period since the OIOS evaluation) were as follows:

Donor contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund, emergency response funds and common humanitarian funds, 2013-2015

(United States dollars)

	2013	*2014*	*2015*
Central Emergency Response Fund[a]	478 765 462	479 853 687	402 650 491
Emergency response funds[b]	171 088 689	200 822 177	446 337 661
Common humanitarian funds[b]	342 067 818	525 144 397	339 224 291

Source: OIOS compilation of OCHA data (for common humanitarian funds and emergency response funds, see http://fts.unocha.org; for the Central Emergency Response Fund, see http://www.unocha.org/cerf/our-donors/funding/cerf-pledges-and-contributions-all).

[a] As at 9 March 2016.

[b] As at 16 February 2016.

36. The OIOS recommendation was aligned with other oversight recommendations issued prior to and since the OIOS evaluation.[14] To implement it, OCHA has undertaken numerous actions to strengthen performance reporting and evaluation of the funds. Most of these actions took place in 2015 for the country-based pooled funds and from 2013 to 2015 for the Central Emergency Response Fund.

37. OCHA developed an overarching framework for the country-based pooled funds, one that removed the distinction between emergency response funds and common humanitarian funds. It subsequently produced a policy instruction and an operational handbook for country-based pooled funds, issued in February 2015.[15] The policy instruction sets out the objectives, management and governance arrangements for all OCHA-managed country-based pooled funds; the operational handbook provides a coherent approach to the strategic and operational management of country-based pooled funds, with tools and processes that serve as minimum

[12] Common humanitarian funds are currently established for the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan.

[13] It also serves as the administrative agent of the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund.

[14] See "Review of recurrent issues identified in recent internal audit engagements for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs" (Report 2015/095), Office of Internal Oversight Services, Internal Audit Division, 8 September 2015.

[15] In 2012 and 2013, OCHA used global monitoring and reporting frameworks for the emergency response funds and the common humanitarian funds.

standards. It provides details on a risk management approach, performance management, monitoring, reporting, evaluations, audits and compliance measures. According to OCHA, the managing agent function is addressed by the operational handbook, as it aims to ensure the most appropriate management arrangements without disrupting operations in the field, allowing for sufficient flexibility for UNDP to continue to provide management and administrative services for country-based pooled funds.

38. OCHA also completed the roll-out of the Grant Management System at the end of 2014. The Grant Management System is a web-based platform, the use of which is mandatory for the management of the entire grant life cycle for all country-based pooled funds. Implementing partners use this interface to submit project proposals and reports, and OCHA coordinates project review, monitoring and partner performance. The system also assists OCHA in implementing a risk-based management approach, as it provides monitoring and financial and narrative reporting. The system also includes a business intelligence module to facilitate reporting against performance indicators, in line with the transformative agenda.[16]

39. OCHA also developed a performance framework for country-based pooled funds in 2015 to help measure their performance on the three expected outcomes of country-based pooled funds outlined in the policy instruction, namely, improved effectiveness of humanitarian response through the direction of funds towards priority humanitarian needs; strengthened leadership of the humanitarian coordinator; and mobilization of resources and support to coordination in support of the humanitarian planning framework.

40. OCHA undertook numerous measures to strengthen monitoring and reporting with respect to the Central Emergency Response Fund. At the overarching level, the objectives of the transformative agenda were closely aligned with, and included in, the OCHA Strategic Framework 2014-2017. As a consequence, transformative agenda-related indicators for the Central Emergency Response Fund were included in its work plan and reported on annually. In addition, updates on the Fund were included in all reports of OCHA to the Office of the Deputy Secretary-General.

41. The Central Emergency Response Fund Performance and Accountability Framework, which was originally developed in 2009 as a means of formalizing a clear set of accountability and reporting processes, provides another level of monitoring and reporting. The Performance and Accountability Framework specifies three to five country-level reviews per year of the value added by the Fund. Since 2009, 29 countries have been assessed through 23 different reviews. In 2013, the Sahel region, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pakistan and Yemen were reviewed; in 2014, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar and the Sudan were reviewed; and in 2015 South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic were reviewed.[17] The Performance and Accountability Framework itself was also regularly revised and improved based on reviews and feedback. The most recent external review by OCHA of the Framework was finalized in 2013.[18] It identified

[16] See http://gms.unocha.org.

[17] See http://www.unocha.org/cerf/reportsevaluations/evaluations/country-reviews/performance-and-accountability-framework.

[18] See "Review of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) Performance and Accountability Framework", prepared by Development and Humanitarian Learning in Action, September 2013.

11 recommendations for strengthening the Framework, all of which OCHA reported as implemented in 2015.

42. OCHA has also provided reporting formats and processes to the field to assist with monitoring and reporting. In 2013, OCHA developed a new reporting format and process for the Central Emergency Response Fund narratives, in order to increase accountability and timely reporting on results. It also rolled out field-based after action reviews as a standard component of the Central Emergency Response Fund reporting process, with the aim of promoting joint reflection on the Fund's performance and results, collective accountability for funds and the facilitation of lessons learning. It has introduced a requirement in the Fund's application template that applicants clearly explain their field-level monitoring and information-sharing plans. A standard tool has also been introduced for recipient agencies to provide interim project status updates to the humanitarian coordinator/resident coordinator, humanitarian country teams and OCHA country offices.

43. OCHA has also provided standard messaging in the formal allocation communication from the Emergency Relief Coordinator, explaining to recipient agencies their Central Emergency Response Fund-related responsibilities for sharing information with the humanitarian coordinator/resident coordinator. It has also developed draft guidance outlining the roles and responsibilities of key actors in relation to Central Emergency Response Fund monitoring and information-sharing at the field level. This guidance was slated for finalization by March 2016.

44. Lastly, both the country-based pooled funds[19] and the Central Emergency Response Fund[20] have been evaluated since the OIOS made its recommendation. References to both funds have also been recently included in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee humanitarian response monitoring guidance for 2016.[21]

45. As OCHA issued the policy instruction and the operational handbook for country-based pooled funds in February 2015, at the time of the triennial review, it was too early to detect outcome level changes resulting from these initiatives. Initial feedback was positive, however, both at Headquarters and in the field. The policy instruction and the operational handbook were seen as providing much-needed consistency in the guidance and tools for the country-based pooled funds and as setting out minimum standards for monitoring, performance reporting and evaluation. The Grant Management System was likewise viewed as a positive tool for streamlining fund management and enhancing accessibility of information; however, further training and refinement were needed. The actions by OCHA to strengthen the Central Emergency Response Fund, meanwhile, were viewed as providing refinement to guidance and measures already in place, with initial positive feedback that it helped improve monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

46. Recommendation 4 has been implemented. There are early signs pointing to the positive effects of actions by OCHA. However, given the high level of financial, programmatic and reputational risk these funds embody — in highly insecure environments and frequently with access restrictions — it is crucial that OCHA

[19] See "Evaluation of the common humanitarian fund: global synthesis report", OCHA, May 2015; and "The global evaluation of the emergency response funds: final report", OCHA, March 2013.

[20] See http://www.unocha.org/cerf/reportsevaluations/evaluations/country-reviews/performance-and-accountability-framework.

[21] Available from https://humanitarianresponse.info/en/programme-cycle/space/document/humanitarian-response-monitoring-guidance.

continue to ensure proper use of the new initiatives, as well as training and support to users and continually monitor and trouble-shoot problems. Owing to this same risk consideration, the OIOS Internal Audit Division will continue to review monitoring and reporting issues,[14] and OCHA will continue to work with the OIOS Investigations Division in a collaborative manner to identify any areas of high risk that are suitable for proactive investigation.

Recommendation 5
Improving modalities for undertaking joint inter-agency evaluations

47. Recommendation 5 reads as follows:

> Within the context of the work being done as part of the transformative agenda, OCHA should work closely with partners in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to revisit and improve the modalities being used to perform joint inter-agency evaluations.

48. This recommendation addressed the OCHA evaluation function in its role as Chair of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group. This role positions OCHA as a central fixture of learning and accountability within the humanitarian system. As the Chair of the Steering Group, its roles and responsibilities include advising the Emergency Relief Coordinator and members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on the strategic use of evaluations to promote the accountability of the humanitarian system, promoting evidence-based policy development and providing support to the reform of the international humanitarian system.

49. Inter-agency evaluations have taken various forms and approaches over time. At the time of the OIOS evaluation, inter-agency real-time evaluations were one of the main inter-agency evaluation modalities of humanitarian action, providing humanitarian country teams and the wider humanitarian system with early assessments of the on-the-ground response during the first three months of an emergency. This recommendation sought to address concerns that joint inter-agency evaluations,[22] and inter-agency real-time evaluations, in particular, yielded low benefits relative to their financial and human resource costs (see E/AC.51/2013/3, para. 46).

50. In response to the recommendation, OCHA, in consultation with its Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group partners, introduced a new modality for inter-agency evaluation, the inter-agency humanitarian evaluation of large-scale system-wide emergencies. Framed as a key component of the humanitarian programme cycle, inter-agency humanitarian evaluation s are full-fledged evaluations, conducted within 9 to 12 months of the initial emergency response and repositioned to focus more pointedly on outcome assessment. Inter-agency humanitarian evaluations are mandatory for all system-wide level 3 emergencies, and can be considered in other cases at the specific request of a humanitarian coordinator or humanitarian country team. As such, inter-agency

[22] In addition to inter-agency real-time evaluations, thematic evaluations of global funds and policy initiatives, such as those of the Central Emergency Response Fund, the common humanitarian funds and the cluster approach, had also been undertaken (see "5-year evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund: synthesis report: final draft", OCHA, 25 July 2011; "Evaluation of the common humanitarian fund: synthesis report", OCHA, 21 March 2011; and Cluster approach evaluation 2: synthesis report, OCHA, April 2010).

humanitarian evaluations were intended to strengthen the transformative agenda pillar of inter-agency accountability in humanitarian action.

51. The inter-agency humanitarian evaluation modality was discussed and agreed by all Inter-Agency Standing Committee members in 2013, and the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group subsequently developed the guidelines for the inter-agency humanitarian evaluations of large-scale system-wide emergencies, which were finalized in April 2014. The guidelines provide a set of operating procedures for inter-agency humanitarian evaluations, including triggers, timelines and procedures, methodological approaches, governance and management arrangements. The guidelines were piloted for the evaluation of the response to Typhoon Haiyan (2014), and subsequently used for the responses in South Sudan (2014) and the Central African Republic (2015). They are also being used for the evaluation of the response in Iraq in 2016.

52. Concurrent with the development of the guidelines, OCHA, in its role as the Chair of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group, reported attempts to improve its policy and strategic support surrounding inter-agency evaluations (inter-agency humanitarian evaluations and other types of evaluation). In this role, OCHA strengthened its coordination of its inter-agency evaluation partners. It also took steps to better highlight the role of evaluation, both real and potential, to Inter-Agency Standing Committee principals and the Emergency Directors Group, with a view to promoting strategic use of evaluations for accountability, policy development and support to humanitarian reform.

53. According to OCHA and its evaluation partners, the renewed focus on evaluation within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the new modality for inter-agency humanitarian evaluation of large-scale humanitarian emergencies, attest to the improvements that have been made in inter-agency evaluation. In addition to instilling a greater focus on outcomes, inter-agency humanitarian evaluations offered greater predictability by providing a mechanism for triggering and conducting such outcome-focused evaluation in all level 3 emergencies. The time frame for the present triennial review did not afford a systematic appraisal of the quality, credibility and utility of the inter-agency humanitarian evaluations conducted to date. According to those within OCHA and its Inter-Agency Standing Committee partners in the Steering Group, however, OCHA efforts have helped strengthen accountability as well as learning.

54. Notwithstanding these reported improvements, evaluation partners acknowledged two ongoing challenges. First, inter-agency humanitarian evaluations, while viewed as an improvement over inter-agency real-time evaluations, were also viewed as providing insufficient information on results achieved and on the respective contributions and accountabilities of individual Inter-Agency Standing Committee members. In addition, data gaps as well as scoping issues (e.g., pre-assessment of accessibility issues related to key areas and stakeholders) were seen as continuing challenges. OCHA has sought feedback from members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and from the evaluation teams after each inter-agency humanitarian evaluation. Based on this feedback, a revision of the aforementioned guidelines is planned in 2016. Secondly, while its partners in the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group appreciated the efforts of OCHA as Chair of the Steering Group, as well as the challenges faced by the evaluation function within OCHA, there was general concern that the function

remained underresourced, and that it still lacked sufficient independence (in accordance with the United Nations Evaluations Group norms and standards) to fulfil its accountability and learning role, its inward self-evaluation and its inter-agency humanitarian evaluation coordination role effectively.

55. Recommendation 5 has been implemented. However, OCHA should continue to improve in its fulfilment of its critical evaluation role, both internally and in its capacity as the Chair of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group. The revision of the inter-agency humanitarian evaluation guidelines should proceed as planned. OCHA has taken steps to strengthen its evaluation function; as a matter of priority, it should continue to enhance the capacity and independence of its evaluation function. Echoing OCHA partners' concerns, OIOS has raised this issue repeatedly, not only in its 2013 evaluation, but also in a 2012 monitoring and evaluation of OCHA,[23] as well as in successive evaluation scorecard reports.[24] As these various sources have collectively underlined, the high level of financial, reputational and programmatic risk inherent in the humanitarian system necessitates strong leadership, sufficient independence and adequate resourcing of the programme's evaluation function.

III. Conclusion

56. The mandate of OCHA is to ensure the timely, coherent, coordinated and principled response of the international community to disasters and emergencies and to facilitate the transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and sustainable development. OCHA has implemented all of the OIOS recommendations, and indicative evidence points to outcome-level results. The steps taken by OCHA to implement the recommendations have had some immediate positive outcomes, with many on the path to longer-term impact. To further increase its effectiveness, OCHA should continue to implement the recommended actions and refine them as necessary to the changing context within which it operates.

(*Signed*) Heidi **Mendoza**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services
23 March 2016

[23] "Inspection of programme-level monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs"(IED-12-001, OIOS-IED), Office of Internal Oversight Services, 2012.

[24] The scorecard report rated a sample of OCHA evaluations to be of generally good quality, but noted that the strengthening of the independence of its evaluation function was "in progress," and information on its resources was "not available" (see "United Nations Secretariat Evaluation Scorecards 2012-2013" (assignment No. IED-15-009), Office of Internal Oversight Services, Inspection and Evaluation Division, 17 November 2015.

Annex*

Comments received from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Thank you for sharing the final draft report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the programme evaluation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and for seeking formal comments from my office.

We appreciate the opportunity to have been able to provide comments to an earlier informal draft of the report. At this stage, OCHA would like to provide the following formal comments on recommendation 3 of the report.

OCHA, in its dual role as an organization implementing the transformative agenda and coordinating the implementation of the agenda on behalf of the humanitarian community, has consistently lent support to multiple inter-agency reviews of the transformative agenda through various channels.

These activities have been regular and thorough, while striving to remain relevant and supportive to ongoing humanitarian operations. Reviews have ranged during this period from regular lessons-learned analysis and action point tracking on key strategic operational issues, to joint inter-agency field missions and regular humanitarian leadership support activities. Leadership in inter-agency reviews is also exercised through the overseeing of coordination of inter-agency operational peer reviews of level 3 responses and direct field support through the Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team, which acts under the aegis of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Emergency Directors Group, as chaired by the Director of the OCHA Coordination and Response Division, in a dual-hatted role. Focus is maintained in the design of these reviews on integrating gender considerations and balance, on supporting field colleagues with practical, resource-efficient solutions and on maintaining a consistent balance of NGO and United Nations representation.

The broader humanitarian and donor community has commended the Emergency Directors and OCHA for this active operational leadership in the implementation of the transformative agenda and supported the open, frank, field-first learning approach taken by the Emergency Directors to track progress and identify areas requiring collection attention to support humanitarian operations, under the leadership of the Chair. This should be noted in the context of the review with respect to recommendation 3.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for the good cooperation in conducting the review.

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* In the present annex, the Office of Internal Oversight Services presents the full text of comments of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. This practice has been instituted in line with General Assembly resolution 64/263, following the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee.

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Triennial review of the implementation of recommendations on the programme evaluation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations three years after taking decisions on evaluations submitted to the Committee (see A/37/38, para. 362). The triennial review determines whether the five recommendations emanating from the programme evaluation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) have been implemented. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the report of OIOS on the evaluation of UNODC (E/AC.51/2013/4) and took note of all five recommendations therein.

All but one of the five recommendations have been implemented.

Under recommendation 1, on focusing on translating its corporate vision through fully integrating its functional areas and aligning its thematic and geographic programmes, UNODC has strengthened the linkages and alignment among its country, regional and thematic programmes and published guidelines to foster a more strategic and integrated approach to its programme planning, the implementation of its strategic framework and the coordination of its institutional partnerships. It has also established the Public Affairs and Policy Support Branch to better factor in research data and threat assessments when determining where to focus its operations.

* E/AC.51/2016/1.

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UNODC has not implemented recommendation 2 on operationalizing an integrated knowledge management strategy, stating that it was unable to do so owing to a lack of resources. However, a strategy has been developed, the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit of UNODC has among its responsibilities "supporting the development of knowledge management and experience sharing within the organization", and other ongoing activities, such as knowledge-sharing events, could be better leveraged to enhance knowledge management in the organization.

Under recommendation 3, on improving functions for guidance and support to programme planning, monitoring and results reporting, UNODC has strengthened its guidance and support for those functions and established a system of interdivisional consultations regarding planning and reporting at the technical and senior management levels. It has also launched a network of monitoring and evaluation quality assurance focal points and plans to roll out a revised road map for results-based management in 2017.

Under recommendation 4, on implementing its fundraising strategy with a special focus on reducing earmarking of extrabudgetary contributions, UNODC has enhanced its 2012-2015 strategy by proposing that funding should be better linked to programme performance and has consistently highlighted the challenges associated with earmarked funding in its publications, reports and communications, including by developing a one-page brochure and graphic to highlight the issue. However, those steps have not yet resulted in the desired outcome of reducing earmarking of extrabudgetary funding.

Under recommendation 5, on establishing a mechanism to ensure formal, systematic tracking of organizational actions that it takes in response to evaluation recommendations made by its Independent Evaluation Unit, in May 2015 UNODC launched and began use of an online tool for tracking those recommendations.

With the exception of recommendation 2, UNODC has implemented the recommendations contained in the OIOS evaluation of 2013, and has seen some positive changes to its programme performance as a result. They include:

- More effective planning of interregional initiatives;
- Better coordination among and integration of country, regional, thematic and global programmes;
- Improved monitoring and reporting of results;
- Enhanced utility of its embedded evaluation function through regular and systematic follow-up to recommendations of the Independent Evaluation Unit.

To further increase its effectiveness, including a greater ability to respond to unexpected developments and global threats and risks associated with drugs and crime, UNODC would need to exercise greater flexibility in its use of its own resources by reducing earmarking of extrabudgetary funds and strengthen its efforts to acquire and allocate the resources necessary to operationalize its knowledge management strategy.

I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-third session in 2013, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the programme evaluation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (E/AC.51/2013/4). The Committee expressed its appreciation for the report and took note of all five recommendations therein.[1] The Committee highlighted the global nature of challenges confronting the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and recognized the effectiveness and the impact of the activities of the Office in the field. It emphasized, in particular, the value of the provision by UNODC of technical expertise in supporting the efforts of member States, at their request, in ratifying international instruments, as well as its role in mobilizing financial and technical assistance to meet the needs of member States in their fight against drugs and crime. It further noted the value of research and analysis by UNODC and of its publications and underlined the important contribution of the Office to capacity-building at both the regional and the national levels. The Committee also noted the need for a wider operational knowledge management strategy to further leverage the resea.ch and analysis work of UNODC.

2. The present report is issued pursuant to a triennial review of those recommendations, and is an examination of the current status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the report. The objective of the triennial review is to report on the extent of implementation of the recommendations from the programme evaluation by UNODC. It is also discussed whether, and, if so, to what extent, implementation of the recommendations has contributed to programme changes.

3. The methodology for the triennial review included:

(a) A review and analysis of biannual progress reports on the status of recommendations that are monitored through the OIOS Issue Track database;

(b) An analysis of relevant information, documents and reports obtained from UNODC, such as thematic, country and regional programme and project documents and reports, the minutes of Executive Committee and senior management meetings and internal interdivisional correspondence;

(c) An assessment of the UNODC evaluation recommendation tracking tool;

(d) Six individual and two group interviews with UNODC management and programme staff.

4. OIOS also attempted to ascertain what changes, if any, had resulted from implementation of the recommendations.

5. The report incorporates comments received from UNODC during the drafting process. A final draft was shared with UNODC and its comments on the draft are attached in the annex to the present report. OIOS expresses its appreciation for the cooperation by UNODC in the drafting of the present report.

[1] E/AC.53/2013/4.

II. Results

6. Of the five recommendations, four have been implemented. The implementation status of each of the five recommendations is discussed below.

Recommendation 1
To focus on translating its corporate vision through fully integrating its functional areas and aligning its thematic and geographic programmes

7. Recommendation 1 reads as follows:

> UNODC, through participation by and ownership of headquarters and field offices, should further focus on translating its corporate vision through fully integrating its functional areas and aligning its thematic and geographic programmes, and also factor in research data and threat assessments when determining where it should concentrate its competencies and operations.

8. In its management response to the OIOS evaluation, UNODC noted that it was an issue that it had already begun to address. It further stated that a "modality for interregional programme cooperation had been developed and approved by the Executive Committee",[2] consisting of a joint programme design, development and approval process for regional and country programmes. OIOS reviewed the structure of the modality and noted that it contained, among other features, specific guidelines on the approval of field programmes, including a specific requirement for linking such programmes with the organization's thematic and global priorities.[3]

9. UNODC has also integrated its functional areas and aligned its thematic and geographic programmes in several ways. First, all UNODC regional and country programmes approved in February 2013, together with thematic and global programmes approved in September 2013, were aligned both with the organization's thematic and global strategies for the period 2012-2015 and with its proposed strategic framework for 2016-2017. As one example illustrating that larger organizational approach, the UNODC country partnership programme for the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2015-2019, has been linked with existing programmes in the region, notably those in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In addition, all three country programmes were further aligned with the regional programme for Central Asia, in order to facilitate an integrated and concerted UNODC response in West and Central Asia.[4] All country programmes in that region have outputs supporting UNODC drug control and cooperation structure through the interregional drug control approach to ensure effective linkages among all UNODC regional programmes affected by the Afghan opiate trade. Furthermore, UNODC has collected data from the region, for example through a survey undertaken in March 2013 on the opiate trade, to inform the organization's country, regional and thematic programme development.

10. In order to better factor in research data and threat assessments when determining where it should concentrate its competencies and operations, UNODC established the Public Affairs and Policy Support Branch in 2013. The Branch is responsible for the production, management and maintenance of a range of policy

[2] E/AC.51/2013/4.
[3] Minutes of the United Nations Office in Vienna/UNODC Executives Committee Meeting, 16 January 2013.
[4] Integrated UNODC Solution for West and Central Asia.

support and management tools to facilitate the effective and efficient implementation of the broad mandates of the Office in the areas of policy analysis and research, normative work, and capacity-building work in the field. In doing this, it collaborates with the Research and Analysis Branch of UNODC on issues related to positioning UNODC to support an accountability framework for security, justice and the rule of law in the post-2015 development agenda. It also collaborates with the Advocacy Section of UNODC on communication strategies for launching key research products, and contributes towards ensuring that UNODC publications influence effective debate and dialogue regarding its mandate.

11. Furthermore, in 2014, UNODC published guidelines to foster a more strategic and integrated approach to its programme planning, the implementation of its strategic framework and the coordination of its institutional partnerships with the United Nations system and other key multilateral partners at the policy and operational level. OIOS reviewed the guidelines and noted that they contained the following tools to facilitate more aligned and cohesive programme planning and management:

- The programme and operations manual
- Automated log-frame application
- Online project progress reports linked to the automated log frame application
- Customized training on results-based management for field- and headquarters-based offices
- UNODC standard glossary of terms
- Templates for partnership agreements and memorandums of understanding
- Monitoring matrix of interagency cooperation activities
- Standard outcome indicators (in collaboration with the relevant UNODC thematic branches)

12. Lastly, UNODC has also made progress in establishing and defining its own position in the context of the global transition to the Sustainable Development Goals with a view to providing more effective support to member States. Key cross-cutting activities in this regard have been consolidated, including those related to its policy support, external relationship management and presence in international networks.[5]

13. Interviews with UNODC staff indicate that they have facilitated better planning of interregional initiatives, as well as better coordination among and integration of country, regional, thematic and global programmes. One positive outcome in particular has been the establishment of more interdivisional teams leading joint workplans with clear performance indicators.

14. The recommendation has been implemented.

Recommendation 2
To operationalize an integrated knowledge management strategy

15. Recommendation 2 reads as follows:

[5] Thematic programme, 2014-2015, Public Affairs and Policy Support Branch, 2014.

UNODC should operationalize an integrated knowledge management strategy to leverage its unique technical competencies and policy solutions and strengthen its research and analysis function.

16. UNODC developed a knowledge management strategy in 2009; however, it has not operationalized the strategy and therefore the recommendation has not been implemented. In November 2013, it presented a paper on the operationalization of the strategy for consideration by the Executive Committee but asked the Committee to postpone further consideration of the paper until December 2013 in order to allow more time for internal interdivisional and senior management consultations. However, the paper was never resubmitted to the Executive Committee.

17. UNODC has asserted that the knowledge management strategy was not operationalized owing to a lack of resources, and noted that operationalization would normally be funded out of core resources, either from the regular budget or through un-earmarked funding. It has stated that it will attempt to raise funds from the donor community for that purpose. UNODC has also indicated that it is awaiting the completion of a review by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2016 of knowledge management in the United Nations system with a view to determining the best way to operationalize its knowledge management strategy.

18. However, several actions and initiatives could have been better leveraged to implement the recommendation. First, a UNODC project on change management (GLO171), which was implemented from 2005 to 2013, had as one of its desired outcomes the promotion of more effective knowledge management, including through peer networks. The project was extended for a further two years, to December 2015, with a budget increase of $1,275,544. In the revised GLO171 project document, UNODC noted that the expected knowledge management outcome had not been achieved owing to lack of funding. It was also stated that the outcome had been dropped since the knowledge management system had already been presented to the Executive Committee, although that was not the case.

19. Other ongoing activities can also be further optimized with a view to operationalizing the UNODC knowledge management strategy. For example, the Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs of UNODC and its Staff Development Unit have jointly organized a series of knowledge-sharing events bringing together headquarters and field staff to discuss topics and issues of common interest. The discussions at those meetings can be captured, analysed and shared with all staff in the interests of more systematic distribution throughout the organization. In addition, programme-level knowledge products, such as good practices and evaluation findings, are disseminated to specific stakeholder audiences.

20. Further, UNODC staff interviewed stated that no dedicated unit within the organization had been assigned responsibility and accountability for operationalizing the knowledge management strategy. However, the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit of UNODC had, among its responsibilities, supporting the development of knowledge management and experience sharing within the organization, in an effort to identify, capture, retain, store, create, evaluate, update, represent and distribute knowledge for use, awareness and learning.[6] Implementation of that would meet the intent of the OIOS recommendation.

[6] Ibid.

21. The recommendation has not been implemented. UNODC should resubmit its knowledge management strategy to the Executive Committee for consideration and endorsement, with a view to operationalization, with support from the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit. Steps to be considered in that regard include better leveraging some of the current activities described above, developing an organization-wide database to systematically and consistently capture institutional knowledge, and the use of regular e-mail broadcasts to disseminate that knowledge to all staff.

Recommendation 3
To improve its functions for guidance and support to programme planning, monitoring and results reporting

22. Recommendation 3 reads as follows:

> UNODC should clarify and improve its functions for guidance and support, possibly through the creation of a standing mechanism, to: (a) programme planning and monitoring; (b) alignment of operational programmes with corporate plans; and (c) results-based management and results reporting.

23. UNODC has strengthened its guidance and support for programme planning, monitoring and results reporting. With regard to programme planning and monitoring, as of November 2014, all country and regional programmes are submitted to regional sections, which ensure and lead the programme review and finalization by the relevant interdivisional task team to highlight key strategic and technical issues, prior to review by the Programme Review Committee to ensure their conformity with the UNODC strategic framework. A similar mechanism has been put in place for global programmes. The Committee is the main interdivisional body that provides oversight of the approval and implementation of UNODC country, regional and global programmes, and provides recommendations to the Executive Director, senior staff and programme managers to ensure the strategic alignment of normative work with operational activities. Following endorsement by the Committee, the programmes and workplans are presented to the Executive Director for further guidance and final approval during the first quarter of the calendar year. The Executive Director also issued a directive in 2015 instructing that quality control of project log frames would be consistently provided to all substantive sections, with advisory support from the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit for the development of log frames for new regional and country programmes.

24. UNODC has also established a system of interdivisional consultations regarding planning and reporting at the technical and senior management levels, which is coordinated by the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit in its role as Secretariat of the Programme Review Committee. UNODC senior management interviewed stated that they monitor existing organizational structures and institutional mechanisms to determine where further guidance and support for planning and programming may be needed.

25. In addition, with regard to monitoring, the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit and the Independent Evaluation Unit established and launched a network of focal points for monitoring and evaluation quality assurance among field and Vienna-based programme offices in 2014. The network members are consulted as needed and provide inputs on new structures, mechanisms and priorities before those are established.

26. With regard to alignment of operational programmes with corporate plans, in 2014, UNODC adopted a nine-pillar programme structure to ensure a more integrated approach to its work programme and activities. OIOS reviewed the UNODC strategic framework and consolidated programme budget for 2014-2015 and noted that both were structured around the following nine pillars:

(a) Transnational organized crime and illicit trafficking;

(b) Prevention, treatment and reintegration, and alternative development;

(c) Countering corruption;

(d) Terrorism prevention;

(e) Justice;

(f) Research, trend analysis and forensics;

(g) Policy support;

(h) Technical cooperation and field support;

(i) Provision of secretariat services and substantive support to the governing bodies and the International Narcotics Control Board.

27. In the area of results-based management, UNODC has developed a draft road map, which was presented to senior managers in 2014. They noted that the Joint Inspection Unit would be undertaking a United Nations system-wide review of results-based management performance throughout 2015, and decided to postpone further consideration of the draft road map pending its report, which is yet to be finalized. An internal evaluation of results-based management was also postponed until after the report was completed but has now been included in the workplan of the Independent Evaluation Unit for 2016-2017. Furthermore, outcome 4 of the revised UNODC project on change management (GLO171) (see para. 16 above) provides for continuous support for field and programme staff with regard to results-based management:

Outcome 4: Field officers are aware of results-based management practices and utilize them as regards project planning, formulation, implementation monitoring and evaluation
Indicator: 90 per cent of project/programme documents as well as other strategic instruments are in line with results-based management practices

28. UNODC staff interviewed noted that they have seen some improvement in the corporate guidance for, and quality of, programme reporting. They stated in particular that UNODC has strengthened its quality assurance procedures by the introduction of several steps for strategic and programmatic review.

29. The recommendation has been implemented. UNODC should follow through on its plan to conduct an in-depth evaluation of results-based management by the fall of 2016 and roll out the results-based management road map by February 2017.

Recommendation 4

To implement its fundraising strategy with special focus on reducing earmarking of extra budgetary contributions

30. Recommendation 4 reads as follows:

> UNODC should further implement its fundraising strategy with special focus on reducing earmarking of extra budgetary contributions.

31. Some of the components contained in the OIOS evaluation recommendation have been addressed in the UNODC fundraising strategy for 2012-2015. In the strategy, it is proposed that funding should be linked to programme performance and based upon agreed outcomes in order to enable the organization to exercise more discretion over its extrabudgetary resources. The following mechanisms for linking funding to programme performance, to be put in place in early 2016, are set out in the strategy:

- Holding a biannual "appeal" or pledging conference — implying biennial or multi-year indicative pledges in line with the UNODC budget cycle
- Encouraging donors to apply a fixed share of their contributions to general purpose funding, thus implying a voluntary and fair means of burden sharing
- Encouraging donors to provide a fixed percentage in soft-earmarking in support of the UNODC regional and thematic programmes, which would allow the inclusion of funds for the necessary policy support functions
- Introducing a system of voluntary assessments such as the United Nations Environment Programme voluntary indicative scale of contributions.[7]

32. In its publications, reports and communications, UNODC has consistently highlighted the challenges associated with earmarked funding and the importance of un-earmarked funding. In November 2014, the Executive Director issued a circular to senior management and heads of divisions to launch the implementation of the above measures from its strategy and its biannual appeal, specifically noting that:

> the content of the 2014 Annual Programme Reports will be used for drafting a consolidated 2014 UNODC Annual Report, to be presented to Member States during the course of 2015. It is envisaged that the Report would also provide the basis for a UNODC Funding Appeal event to be held in 2015.

33. Furthermore, in 2015 UNODC prepared a one-page brochure highlighting the programme areas that would be negatively affected by a sustained decline in general purpose funding and has used it in bilateral meetings with donors. It specifically states in the brochure that:

> UNODC needs to retain the operational flexibility to provide seed funding for new programmes, support partially funded interventions prioritized by UNODC management, and respond to urgent ad-hoc requests from Member States and growing demands for action in UNODC-mandated areas. In addition, unexpected developments caused by external factors, including higher security risks and force majeure, need to be covered from un-earmarked resources.

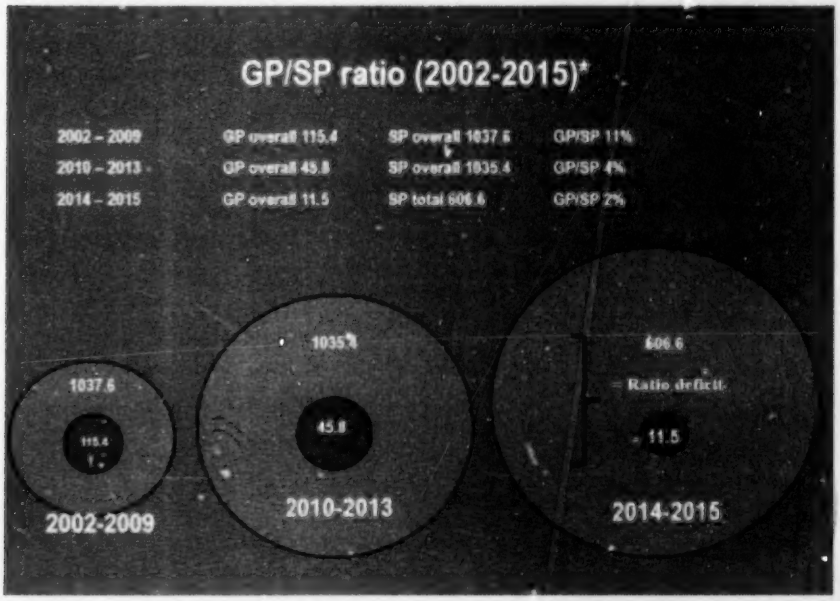
[7] See www.unodc.org/documents/donors/Fundraising.Strategyv._final_print_version.5_Sep.2012.pdf, p. 27.

34. Also highlighted in the brochure are the key research functions of UNODC, which are funded from the general purpose budget and which have enabled it to produce flagship publications such as the *World Drug Report*, *the Global Study on Homicide* and global and regional *Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessments*.

35. The UNODC Annual Report 2014 also contains a reference to measures taken by UNODC to reduce earmarking, including the use of International Public Sector Accounting Standards to facilitate transparent presentation of UNODC financial results to donors and the establishment of the Framework of Engagement of External Parties to improve transparency with regard to the selection and management of implementing partners and grantees.[8]

36. Additionally, UNODC has compiled a funding trend analysis to provide a visual graphic for its advocacy efforts with member States and donors and which is being used as part of the organization's communications toolkit. The analysis, shown in figure 1, illustrates that the desired funding outcomes have not yet been achieved, and that the decline in the ratio of general purpose to earmarked funding has persisted since 2010, with the 2014-2015 biennium being the worst with regard to the ratio of special purpose/earmarked funds to general purpose funds.

Figure 1
UNODC funding trends, 2002-2015



Source: UNODC brochure.
Abbreviations: GP, general purpose funding; SP, special purpose funding.

37. The recommendation has been implemented. However, it has not yet resulted in the desired outcome of reducing earmarking of extrabudgetary funding. As

[8] UNODC Annual Report 2014, p. 125.

discussed in its evaluation of 2013, UNODC requires greater flexibility with regard to its resource utilization in order to more effectively meet its greatest priorities and member State demands in a timely manner. The programme performance of UNODC may be negatively affected if the current trends in decreasing general purpose funding continue. To further reduce earmarking of extrabudgetary contributions, UNODC should continue with its information-sharing and advocacy efforts and consider additional action.

Recommendation 5

To establish a mechanism to ensure formal, systematic tracking of organizational actions that it takes in response to its evaluation recommendations

38. Recommendation 5 reads as follows:

> UNODC should establish a mechanism to ensure formal, systematic tracking of and periodic reporting to Member States on organizational actions that it takes in response to the recommendations made by the Independent Evaluation Unit.

39. In May 2015, UNODC launched and began use of an online tool for tracking the implementation of evaluation recommendations by its Independent Evaluation Unit. The tool has been actively in use for just under a year. In a special message dated 6 May 2015 to programme managers when the tool was introduced, the Unit advised that "another further developed feature of this application is the recommendations follow-up plan for more easily keeping track of the implementation status of evaluation recommendations." OIOS reviewed the database and verified that the online tracking tool was already being used and populated with data.

40. Data currently in the tracking tool from 47 global, regional, country and cluster evaluations by the Independent Evaluation Unit are shown in tables 1 and 2 below:[9]

Table 1

Independent Evaluation Unit recommendations captured in the UNODC tracking tool

Number of recommendations accepted	442
Number of recommendations partially accepted	59
Number of recommendations rejected	21
Total number of recommendations	**588**

Source: UNODC recommendation tracking tool.

[9] Some of the data from 2016 have yet to be uploaded; the data may thus appear incomplete.

Table 2
Status of Independent Evaluation Unit recommendations in UNODC tracking tool

Implementation in progress	507
Fully implemented	33
Partially implemented	5
No longer relevant	6
Could not be implemented	3

Source: UNODC recommendation tracking tool.

41. UNODC staff interviewed stated that, with consistent use of the online tool, senior management would be able to monitor, track and enforce the implementation of recommendations from evaluations by the Independent Evaluation Unit. The activation of the tool has begun to contribute to more useful evaluations and greater use of evaluative evidence in programmatic decision-making and lesson learning. Section 3 of the online tool reporting template, "Lessons learned, good practices, risks and challenges, and suggested adaptations", contains the following guideline:

(1) Key lessons learned (including the recommendations of the Programme Steering Committee and the results of evaluations, if any)
Whether, for example, there have been specific evaluation recommendations for the programme itself and/or for relevant projects that contribute to the programme

42. In accordance with the above guideline, programme managers have been using the tool to report on actions taken to implement evaluation recommendations with a view to improving programme performance. As an example, the midterm evaluation of the country programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran[10] included five recommendations, one of which called for a revision of the programme log frame and better baseline data collection with a view to better orienting the programme towards reporting and progress monitoring. Follow-up reporting on the recommendation indicated that a consultant had been hired to identify a number of qualitative indicators to improve the monitoring of results achieved in the programme.

43. The recommendation has been implemented.

III. Conclusion

44. UNODC continues to fulfil its mandate to support member States in responding to global threats related to drugs and crime. Except in the case of recommendation 2, the Office has taken steps to implement the recommendations contained in the OIOS evaluation of 2013, and has seen some positive changes to its programme performance as a result. They include:

[10] UNODC Technical Cooperation on Drugs and Crime in the Islamic Republic of Iran — Country Programme 2011-2014.

- More effective planning of interregional initiatives
- Better coordination among and integration of country, regional, thematic and global programmes
- Improved monitoring and reporting of results
- Enhanced utility of its embedded evaluation function through regular and systematic follow-up to recommendations by the Independent Evaluation Unit

45. To further increase its effectiveness, including a greater ability to respond to unexpected developments and global threats and risks associated with drugs and crime, UNODC would need to exercise greater flexibility in the use of its own resources by reducing earmarking of extrabudgetary funds. As noted above, in paragraph 37, the current lack of flexibility will hamper its agility in responding to threats and risks as well as urgent requests from member States. UNODC should also step up its efforts to acquire and allocate the resources necessary to operationalize its knowledge management strategy, while at the same time putting in place mechanisms with few or no resource requirements, such as a central database to capture institutional knowledge. With those additional efforts, UNODC will further enhance its capacity to fulfil its important mandate.

(*Signed*) Heidi **Mendoza**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

23 March 2016

Annex*

Comments received from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) would like to extend its gratitude to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) for the opportunity to provide comments on the report. UNODC fully acknowledges the importance of the triennial review and thanks OIOS for its consultative approach throughout the preparation of the report.

UNODC has studied the report carefully and appreciates the acknowledgement of important progress made in the three years since 2013 by the Office. UNODC would like to respond to the following recommendation made by OIOS in paragraph 21:

"The recommendation has not been implemented. UNODC should resubmit its knowledge management strategy to the Executive Committee for consideration and endorsement, and operationalization by the already dedicated unit — the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit. Some steps that can be considered in that regard include better leveraging some of the current activities described above; developing an organization-wide database that can systematically and consistently capture institutional knowledge; and the use of regular e-mail broadcasts for disseminating that knowledge among all staff."

Regarding the above recommendation, knowledge management takes place systematically at the programme level: knowledge products (i.e. research, analyses, databases, good practices, evaluation findings etc.) are issued and disseminated regularly to specific stakeholder audiences; likewise, knowledge services are also provided through periodic briefings to key constituencies such as staff, senior managers and member States. An example is the UNODC Global eLearning Programme which, in 2015, covered and delivered online training in 20 thematic courses, consisting of 231 modules in English and 11 other languages, providing on-demand capacity-building to member States' officials. More than 80 member States were connected to the online and offline platforms and more than 50 have requested access to UNODC training.

It should be noted that the role of the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit with regard to knowledge management is a supportive one, as mentioned in paragraph 20 above. It is therefore incorrect to refer to the Unit as the "dedicated unit" for the purposes of operationalizing the knowledge management strategy. A knowledge management systemic initiative can be undertaken only through a corporate approach and with the support of the necessary financial and human resources, neither of which have materialized to date.

UNODC is in the process of recruiting a temporary staff member with a view to, inter alia, revising the knowledge management strategy. The revision will take fully into account the results of the forthcoming review by the Joint Inspection Unit

* In the present annex, the Office of Internal Oversight Services presents the full text of comments received from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. This practice has been instituted in line with General Assembly resolution 64/263, following the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee.

of knowledge management in the United Nations system, to be carried out in 2016. New patterns of knowledge use and sharing by all organizations will be identified in the review, with a view to triggering reduction of costs system-wide and facilitating access for member States and other stakeholders. As stated in the terms of reference: "It will give an indication on the possible ways and means to improve the preparedness of the participating organizations to follow or, at their best, to turn into better account the potential of information and communication tools in optimizing the performance of each organization and of the United Nations system as a whole". It is expected that the Joint Inspection Unit report will be completed by December 2016. The findings and recommendations of the review will provide key input for the Office's future course of action. On the basis of the report, the Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit will resubmit a revised knowledge management strategy to the Executive Committee in the first quarter of 2017, including suggestions on how it may be operationalized. We also trust that, by becoming part of an integrated United Nations approach to knowledge management, the Office would be in a better position to attract the necessary resources from the donor community, a key condition for operationalizing the knowledge management strategy.

Pending the availability of resources, the Office will continue with its knowledge management efforts at the programme level, but, as indicated above, will not be in a position to engage in a wider initiative.

United Nations E/AC.51/2016/5

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Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Coordination questions: New Partnership for Africa's Development

United Nations system support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of activities undertaken by the United Nations system in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) since June 2015. It is organized around the nine clusters established under the Regional Coordination Mechanism of the United Nations entities working in Africa.

During the review period, the United Nations system continued to strengthen its support in respect of the implementation of the NEPAD and African Union strategic plans for the period 2014-2017, notably in the context of the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the African Year of Human Rights with a Particular Focus on the Rights of Women. The United Nations system supported the African Union and its subregional institutions in the context of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

* E/AC.51/2016/1.

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The report underlines the need for United Nations entities to enhance coordination and coherence in supporting the development of Africa following the adoption in 2015 of such global and regional development frameworks as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework on Climate Change and the African Union's Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan. The convergence of the global and regional goals calls for more support in mobilizing resources, improved synergies and coordination in the implementation of all development frameworks in Africa.

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-fifth session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to report to the Committee at its forty-sixth session, and annually thereafter, on the support provided by the United Nations system to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (see A/60/16, para. 237). The recommendation was endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 70/8.

II. Support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

2. The present report highlights activities implemented by the United Nations system in support of NEPAD since June 2015, organized around nine thematic clusters corresponding to the priorities of NEPAD and co-chaired by United Nations entities and the African Union Commission. It was prepared on the basis of inputs received from the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and the departments of the Secretariat on key activities, programmes and projects implemented in the period 2015-2016. In the request for inputs, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa emphasized the recommendations by the Committee for Programme and Coordination to highlight impact in both qualitative and quantitative terms, activities undertaken regarding the protection of women and children from sexual violence and activities aimed at combating new challenges relating to governance, young people, violent extremism and human trafficking.

A. Infrastructure development

3. The infrastructure cluster co-coordinated by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) comprises four subclusters: energy, information and communications technology, transport, and water and sanitation.

4. Through the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative and the Dakar Agenda for Action, cluster members continued to support infrastructure development, a key pillar of NEPAD and the African Union's Agenda 2063. Seven United Nations entities implemented some 114 activities.

5. To support the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, the World Bank has invested over $1.25 billion to date in national and regional energy, transport, information and communications technology (ICT), and water projects. ECA collaborated with the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and the African Union Commission in developing the monitoring and evaluation framework of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa and the African Infrastructure Database, with a view to creating the African Infrastructure Network.

6. To advance the Dakar Agenda for Action, ECA produced a study on enhancing domestic resource mobilization for transboundary infrastructure projects, covering the 16 projects and key data relevant to potential investors. ECA and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency conducted field consultations with the Economic

Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor to assess the progress and challenges in the development of the transboundary projects within the regional economic communities. These consultations contributed to the development of a regional model law promoting private sector participation in transboundary projects.

7. In the energy sector, cluster members supported the Africa Power Vision and the African Clean Energy Corridor initiative to increase energy access across Africa. The International Finance Corporation has developed a number of vehicles to attract institutional investors to projects focused on renewable energy. To increase investments in energy efficiency for sustainable development and climate change mitigation, ECA provided training on the preparation and financing of energy efficiency projects and produced case study reports on best cases of regulatory and institutional frameworks for energy efficiency investments in the period 2013-2015. Through the initiative, many investors and local commercial banks gained awareness of the importance of financing energy efficiency in Africa.

8. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) supported Côte d'Ivoire in designing and implementing seven pilot mini-grids using solar energy, totalling over 200 kW of capacity and servicing approximately 4,000 households and small businesses in addition to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 500 to 3,580 tons a year.

9. In 2015, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) supported Kenya and Nigeria in the preparation of their plans for energy security and sustainable development through the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review. In addition, IAEA implemented 35 integrated nuclear security support plans, conducted integrated nuclear security support plan review meetings in 10 African countries and provided training to over 500 individuals to enhance capability in nuclear security.

10. In the information and communications technology sector, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) continued to harmonize regional and subregional ICT policies and regulatory frameworks. Model laws and policies were updated in line with the current technology environment in African subregions. This enhanced the environment for public-private investment in ICT infrastructure.

11. In the transport sector, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) increased assistance and capacity-building activities in respect of 38 African countries, implementing effective aviation security programmes in 2015. As at March 2016, ICAO plans of action had been implemented in 32 African countries, assisting them in reducing the rate of aircraft accidents and thereby improving aviation safety capability.

12. In the water sector, IAEA continued to address the water challenges faced by African countries through the application of nuclear and isotopic techniques. A total of 11 new national projects and 3 regional projects were initiated in 2016 to enhance water resource management capacity in Africa. In the Niger, IAEA supported the development of national capacities in geochemistry and isotope hydrology. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) facilitated a policy dialogue on institutional and legal arrangements among Malawi, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania to strengthen regional capacity and awareness on mountain ecosystem law and governance. The dialogue improved cooperation on transboundary issues related to Lake Malawi.

B. Governance

13. The governance cluster, co-coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), comprises four subclusters: democracy and governance, economic and corporate governance, human rights, and public service and administration.

14. During the review period, cluster members advanced the governance and democracy agenda by supporting the African Peer Review Mechanism. As a result, the Mechanism peer reviewed its eighteenth country (out of 35 member countries), and the secretariat of the Mechanism is in the process of aligning its administrative measures and policies with those of the African Union Commission, with a view to positioning itself as the monitoring tool for Agenda 2063. A total of 31 activities conducted by six United Nations entities are highlighted.

15. On democracy and governance, ECA supported regional economic communities and African Peer Review Mechanism countries in accelerating the peer review process. In December 2015, ECA organized a workshop on peer learning and sharing experiences for the East African region. A number of recommendations were highlighted to encourage accession to the Peer Review Mechanism. At the country level, Chad, Djibouti and Senegal benefited from assistance from ECA, which led to Djibouti being peer reviewed by the African Peer Review Forum in January 2016.

16. The United Nations Democracy Fund funded 15 projects implemented by local civil society organizations. The projects focused on the engagement of young people and women through training for journalists, political participation and human rights activities. In Rwanda, the Democracy Fund funded a project promoting democratic and human rights values among young people, and in Zimbabwe, it funded a project focused on electoral process training for civil society.

17. The Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat continued its mediation in the Central African Republic by facilitating coordination, keeping the parties engaged and providing guidance. This led to the holding of successful presidential elections on 14 February 2016 and legislative elections on 31 March 2016.

18. The Department of Political Affairs also continued to work as part of the Joint International Facilitation Team, which included the East African Community, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the African Union, to facilitate dialogue between the Government and the opposition forces in Burundi. In July 2015, the Department held consultations to reiterate the need for dialogue as a catalyst for the holding of credible and peaceful elections in Burundi. The Department also extended United Nations support to the high-level facilitator of the East African Community on Burundi.

19. The Department of Political Affairs continued to support the African Union in combating illicit drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse in West Africa. At the meeting of the West Africa Coast Initiative high-level policy committee heid in Bissau in November 2015, the Department galvanized support and commitments to fight transnational organized crime in Guinea-Bissau and facilitated the agreement on new strategic orientations for the extension of the West Africa Coast Initiative programme in the subregion until 2017.

20. On economic and corporate governance, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) supported the formulation and implementation

of competition law and policy. In Zimbabwe, UNCTAD strengthened competition law enforcement through workshops and the operationalization, in March 2016, of an online complaint filing system to address anti-competitive business practices. UNCTAD continued to enhance the investment environment through its investment policy review programme. It published the investment policy review for Madagascar and started preparing the review for the Gambia. UNCTAD assisted the Republic of the Congo and the Sudan in the implementation of their investment policy review recommendations.

21. On human rights, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the African Union supported the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in reflecting aspects of the right to nationality and the eradication of statelessness in Africa in its draft Protocol. The Protocol was adopted at the eighteenth extraordinary session of the Commission, held in Nairobi in August 2015.

22. On public administration, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat supported Togo in formulating a reform programme. The Department organized a conference on the theme "Support to developing capacities for effective governance, public administration and service delivery in developing countries for sustainable development", which was held in August 2015. The conference helped to raise awareness regarding the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals, with a particular focus on governmental, public administration and human resource capacity needs.

C. Peace and security

23. The peace and security cluster, co-chaired by the United Nations Office to the African Union, on behalf of the Department of Political Affairs, comprises four subclusters: the African Peace and Security Architecture, post-conflict reconstruction and development, emergency preparedness and response, and transitional justice.

24. Over the review period, cluster members advanced the peace and security agenda, as highlighted by the 72 activities implemented by six United Nations entities.

25. The Department of Political Affairs continued to support ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in implementing the outcomes of the Summit of Heads of State and Government on Maritime Safety and Security, held in Yaoundé in 2013. In September 2015, the Department chaired a forum on security in the Gulf of Guinea in Abuja, which advocated for the full operationalization of the Interregional Coordination Centre for Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea. As a result, the Centre adopted recommendations on the recruitment of personnel, the budget and the programme of activities in February 2016. The Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat continued to build the capacity and enhance the knowledge of legislators and officials of Somalia on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which sets out the rights and duties of States in respect of suppressing piracy and other threats to marine security.

26. The Department of Political Affairs continued to support the Mano River Union countries, namely, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, in the

implementation of the cross-border security strategy. The United Nations Peacebuilding Fund supported the establishment of joint border security and confidence-building units along the borders of the Mano River Union countries, raising the number to 15 multinational border units and 7 national border units. The Department of Political Affairs and the Mano River Union developed a joint workplan in February 2016 to strengthen the joint border security and confidence-building units and facilitate the sharing of best practices among national electoral management bodies.

27. In November 2015, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank co-organized a high-level meeting on the theme "Tackling the socioeconomic root causes of conflict towards achieving the goal of a conflict-free Africa in the context of the implementation of Africa's transformative Agenda 2063 and the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which was held in Cairo. The participants made recommendations on the socioeconomic and developmental measures needed to accompany military responses, with a view to resolving conflict in areas facing violent extremism and terrorism, and on how to leverage NEPAD in addressing the underlying socioeconomic and development fragilities.

28. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) implemented peacebuilding, education and advocacy programmes totalling $27.6 million in 11 countries, which highlighted the exclusion of adolescents and young people as a major root cause of conflict, along with poverty, inequality and weak social services. UNICEF implemented various conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding interventions engaging adolescents and young people in peacebuilding, including life skills training, in Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Dadaab refugee camp; community-based volunteer activities in Liberia and Sierra Leone; and participatory research in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda.

29. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict continued global advocacy and engagement with parties to conflict to enhance the protection of children affected by armed conflict in the eight African countries included in the children and armed conflict agenda.[1] In South Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition signed an action plan with the United Nations in December 2015 to stop the recruitment and use of children. The Special Representative also advocated for the inclusion of child protection in the peace agreement signed by the parties to the conflict in South Sudan in August 2015 and in the implementation of the peace agreement in Mali.

30. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reinforced the protection of women and children from sexual violence through support for criminal justice responses to violence against women and juvenile justice. In Egypt, in cooperation with the Prosecutor General's Office, UNODC developed training and procedural manuals on the appropriate handling of such cases. In Chad, the Office provided legal advisory services and policy advice on justice for children and violence against children. In Nigeria, UNODC, jointly with UNICEF, has been supporting the implementation of the recently adopted legislation on juvenile justice. In Southern Africa, UNODC established a one-stop centre and gender-based-violence hotline in Namibia in 2015.

[1] The Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and the Sudan.

31. The Department of Political Affairs continued to strengthen bilateral, subregional and international cooperation to combat threats of terrorism and violent extremism arising from the activities of Boko Haram. In February 2016, the Department conducted missions in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria to assess the impact of the violence and encourage national authorities to hold the planned ECCAS-ECOWAS summit on Boko Haram. The summit will initiate the development of a regional strategy/response to address the threat of Boko Haram.

32. The Department of Political Affairs provided support for the integrated implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria. The Department facilitated the development of regional counter-terrorism strategies in Central and Southern Africa, which were adopted in 2015, in close cooperation with the African Union Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism, ECCAS, SADC and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. The strategies will enable coordinated and sustained efforts to prevent and counter the spread of terrorist activities in both regions. Support for capacity-building in the area of cross- border cooperation on border security was provided to countries in the Sahel region and the Horn of Africa. Efforts focused on respecting human rights while countering terrorism and preventing and countering violent extremism, kidnapping for ransom and terrorist financing.

33. On emergency preparedness and response, following the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has been strengthening the implementation of the Framework in Africa; this led to the adoption of the Yaoundé Declaration on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa in 2015, which lays the foundation for a road map for the implementation of the Framework.

34. The United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction coordinated the monitoring of national progress on disaster risk reduction through periodic reports on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, covering 33 African countries for the 2013-2015 cycle. The Inter-Agency Secretariat has also been working with African countries to integrate risk profiling into programmes and make all development financing risk-informed. Burkina Faso, the Comoros, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, the Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, Togo and the United Republic of Tanzania have completed hybrid and probabilistic risk profiles. As a result, Governments have gained the capacity for analytical assessment of catastrophic risk.

D. Agriculture, food security and rural development

35. The agriculture, food security and rural development cluster is co-coordinated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The cluster helped to enhance the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, in line with the Maputo Declaration. Highlights include the implementation of 173 activities by nine United Nations entities.

36. World Bank lending for agriculture for the period under review amounted to some $1.1 billion in support of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. The World Bank supported the implementation of the Programme through the $65.2 million Multi-Donor Trust Fund, which ended in December 2015.

Preparations for a new Multi-Donor Trust Fund to support the implementation of the Malabo Declaration are under way. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) continued to mainstream agricultural risk management into the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme agricultural investment plans of Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, the Niger, Senegal and Uganda. In 2015, IFAD conducted risk management and assessment activities as well as capacity-building activities on agricultural risk management in those countries. This helped to support sustainable agricultural growth and food security. Following a survey conducted in November 2015, FAO supported the improvement of access to finance for women in agribusiness, in an effort to better the plight of women in agriculture.

37. UNCTAD supported Ethiopia in preparing a national strategy on green exports and in convening the first national stakeholder workshop on Ethiopia's National Green Export Review in Addis Ababa in December 2015. The strategy contributed to boosting Ethiopia's exports in green sectors and products with comparative advantage. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) produced a film charting the establishment of a geographical indication process in East Africa that showcases the successful use of the intellectual property system by local businesses.

38. To empower smallholders, the Common Fund for Commodities supported the Tolaro Global factory expansion in Benin, which enhanced the production of quality cashew nuts in a socially responsible environment. The Fund supported East Africa Limited, a one-stop integrated service provider for smallholder outgrowers, which contributed to an increase in the export of paprika from Malawi to South African and European buyers. The Fund also supported a project on scaling up smallholder-based premium coffee production in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, as a result of which exports are expected to increase from $0.4 million to $12 million in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and from $4 million to $7 million in Rwanda between 2015 and 2021.

39. On food security, the World Food Programme (WFP) continued to inform nutrition policies through the initiative "Cost of Hunger in Africa Study". The initiative estimates the social and economic cost of undernutrition, advocates for increased investment by Governments in nutrition and provides evidence-based guidance on nutrition policies and strategies. In 2015, studies were concluded in Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Madagascar and Malawi. IAEA implemented 120 national and 6 regional projects to help African countries to achieve food security and reduce poverty through the improvement of agricultural productivity, the creation of tsetse-free zones, combating desertification, preventing transboundary animal disease and improving crop and livestock production in the region.

40. In line with the Malabo Declaration on reducing post-harvest losses by 50 per cent by 2025, UNIDO implemented a $1 million project to increase food security for targeted regions of South Sudan. To date, the project has led to the procurement of post-harvest reduction fishing equipment; the development of fish markets in two communities as well as a small-scale business development centre; and the development of a capacity-building programme to ensure the sustainability of the fishery sector.

41. To further rural development, FAO has been supporting rural institutions in 24 African countries by strengthening performance, governance and gender equality in producers' organizations. It also enhanced livelihoods through the development

of small-scale businesses, improved access to markets, services and finance and improved direct participation in policymaking. FAO supported the scaling-up of innovative approaches to improve access to rural agricultural finance for smallholder farmers and small and medium agro-enterprises under its Inclusive Finance for Rural Development initiative, including a programme on the development of financial products and services for smallholders in Zimbabwe.

E. Industry, trade and market access

42. The industry, trade and market access cluster, co-chaired by UNIDO, supported African regional and subregional organizations in building productive capacity for trade, market access and continent-wide sustainable industrialization.

43. Over the review period, nine United Nations entities conducted some 69 activities in support of the implementation of the Continental Free Trade Area through the strengthening of productive capacity, the facilitation of trade negotiations and the enhancement of market access.

44. UNIDO collaborated with the African Union Commission in planning the third African Union Commission Strategic Stakeholders' Retreat on the African Union Action Plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa, held in Nairobi in October 2015. The retreat enhanced coherence and cooperation within the framework of the action plan and other continental industrial development initiatives.

45. In September 2015, on the margin of the General Assembly, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, UNIDO, ECA and the African Union co-organized a high-level event on the theme "Operationalization of the post-2015 development agenda for African industrialization", which brought together several African Heads of State and Government. The participants adopted a communiqué, which renewed political commitment to the implementation of Africa's development priorities in the area of inclusive and sustainable industrial development and urged the African Union to call for an African Industrialization Decade.

46. To promote sustainable economic growth through innovation and technology, WIPO organized expert missions to Algeria and Tunisia with a view to enhancing and modernizing their Industrial Property Automation System to support their intellectual property offices. WIPO also organized the Arab Regional Meeting on the Industrial Property Administration System, in cooperation with the Egyptian Patent Office, which was held in Cairo in August 2015.

47. The International Trade Centre (ITC) supported the development of sustainable South-South business relationships in the cotton sector through policy-level work with African regional economic communities. Three national cotton-to-clothing strategies were developed, in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe.

48. On trade, ITC promoted the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in regional and international value chains in selected agro-food sectors, which contributed to inclusive and sustainable trade-led growth in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, by improving the competitiveness of small and medium-sized producers and strengthening trade and investment support institutions in the three countries. Kenya mango exporters signed business transactions for exports of more than $1.1 million. In the United Republic of

Tanzania, at least 30 enterprises became export-ready. In Zambia, branding support for Zambian honey to increase value addition was provided to nine small and medium-sized enterprises. A total of 26 International Organization for Standardization packaging standards and one technical specification were approved as Zambian standards.

49. UNCTAD supported the mainstreaming of trade into national development strategies through the Enhanced Integrated Framework by updating the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study in the Niger and Ethiopia. In the Comoros, the Enhanced Integrated Framework increased the competitiveness of the three main export products, including cloves, vanilla and ylang-ylang, by organizing the producers and processors into cooperatives. In the Gambia, it developed the cashew, sesame and groundnut sectors by supporting the country's quality assurance framework in the three sectors. In Rwanda, the Enhanced Integrated Framework supported the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises in six export-oriented clusters, namely, pineapples, bananas, vegetables, honey, flour and nuts.

50. ECA coordinated the engagement of the United Nations system in the launch of the Continental Free Trade Area negotiations, including in the preparation of the draft negotiation texts. Specific activities included participation in the Continental Free Trade Area Task Force and continued technical support to the African Union Commission. UNCTAD also supported African countries in the Continental Free Trade Area negotiations and has been working with COMESA, the East African Community, ECOWAS, the Southern Africa Customs Union and SADC to strengthen regional economic integration in the area of regulations affecting trade. The Continental Free Trade Area negotiations were officially launched in June 2015.

51. The World Trade Organization (WTO) continued to provide technical assistance to African countries through its various technical assistance initiatives, including increased secretariat support as they prepared their common position in the run-up to the tenth WTO Ministerial Conference and during the Conference itself, which was held in Nairobi in December 2015.

52. Under the Aid for Trade initiative, WTO and ECA supported Africa's contribution to the fifth global review of the initiative, held in June 2015. Both institutions facilitated Africa s contribution to the review through preparatory activities, including the launch of a report on reducing trade costs to support Africa's transformation.

53. UNCTAD, through its Automated System for Customs Data programme, helped to increase the revenue collected by Customs by more than 25 per cent and to reduce clearing times and costs. A total of 29 African countries benefited from the programme in 2015. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States commissioned a study for the Africa region on improving transit cooperation, trade and trade facilitation for the benefit of the landlocked developing countries in order to review the key achievements and constraints in transition issues and make policy recommendations to ensure the successful participation of African landlocked developing countries in international trade.

54. On market access, UNCTAD provided training on non-tariff measures for the tripartite regional economic communities. Through data collection, it strengthened transparency on non-tariff measures and supported policymakers in 12 countries in

addressing trade obstacles. UNCTAD started a project addressing non-tariff measures in ECOWAS in order to strengthen regional integration. In November 2015, the Standards and Trade Development Facility published a report on ways to improve the implementation of sanitary and phytosanitary controls in Malawi, South Africa and Zambia, while ensuring safe trade, low transaction costs and health protection.

F. Environment, population and urbanization

55. The cluster on environment, population and urbanization, co-coordinated by UNEP, continued to address challenges relating to environmental degradation, population growth and migration, rapid urbanization and the lack of demographic statistics.

56. Cluster members supported the implementation of the NEPAD Action Plan for the Environment, advocacy for Africa's position on climate change, the promotion of the demographic dividend and the advancement of urbanization. Highlights include 47 activities implemented by 13 United Nations entities.

57. As the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, UNEP continued to support the Ministerial Conference in promoting regional cooperation on addressing environmental issues confronting the region and worked with partners to support the implementation of the decisions of the Ministerial Conference. UNEP continued to support the African Union in the finalization of the African strategy on combating illegal trade in African wild fauna and flora, which was endorsed by the African Union Summit in June 2015.

58. UNEP also established a small-scale funding agreement of $50,000, which enabled the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency to assess the regional flagship programmes. In December 2015, UNEP and the Planning and Coordinating Agency co-organized a side event on regional flagship programmes at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The secretariat of the Convention prepared a methodological guiding tool to support African countries in integrating land use measures into their intended nationally determined contributions and provided inputs to regional forums on such contributions held in Addis Ababa and Niamey.

59. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ECOWAS co-organized a workshop on environment statistics in support of the implementation of the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics, held in Lomé in October 2015. The World Meteorological Organization has been improving the understanding of gender-specific needs in the provision, access and use of weather and climate services for resilience-building.

60. With the support of ICAO and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the first aviation-related Clean Development Mechanism was adopted in November 2015. The methodology quantifies carbon dioxide reductions resulting from the use of electric aircraft taxiing systems and allows for the creation of saleable credits in developing countries that can be purchased by industrialized countries to meet their carbon dioxide emission reduction targets.

61. To strengthen sustainable land and water management, the World Bank continued to support the Great Green Wall Initiative in building resilience through

innovation, communication and knowledge services. The World Bank also managed the multi-donor TerrAfrica Leveraging Fund, which is supporting the secretariat of TerrAfrica through a grant, in the amount of $2.0 million, up to the end of May 2017. This assistance has contributed to a more efficient and effective response to country demand for sustainable land and water management. With a grant of $0.1 million, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification financed pilot projects on land degradation neutrality in five countries, with a focus on testing and fine-tuning a methodological approach to the implementation of land degradation neutrality.

62. On population, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) collaborated with the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning in supporting national demographic dividend analyses in Botswana, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. In each country, UNFPA provided technical and fiscal support to model the prospects for a demographic transition and a demographic dividend, with the aim of furthering the achievement of the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development. UNFPA also collaborated with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to host its first global hackathon in Uganda. Partners from 17 countries generated mobile health prototypes to promote adolescent sexual and reproductive health, such as the "GetIn" mobile application, which can be used by community health workers to map households where pregnant girls reside.

63. In November 2015, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa joined the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the African Union Commission and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes in organizing a high-level meeting on the theme "Conflict-induced migration in Africa: Maximizing new opportunities to address its peace, security and inclusive development dimensions". Participants explored strategies to prevent and address the root causes of forced migration within the context of the various African and global agendas and raised awareness on the causes and patterns of conflict-induced or forced migration and on the consequences for inclusive and sustainable development in Africa.

64. The World Tourism Organization, UNDP and the World Bank promoted the tourism industry as a catalyst for sustainable economic and social development in Africa through the financing of projects on the development of tourism management master plans as well as projects developed under the Sustainable Tourism — Eliminating Poverty Initiative.

65. On urbanization, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) provided financial and technical support for the development of land indicators to complement the post-2015 development agenda. UN-Habitat supported Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia in their ongoing land reforms. It collaborated on capacity development activities with the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development and other partners through the holding of learning events on innovative concepts and tools in land administration in Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

G. Social and human development

66. The cluster on social and human development, co-coordinated by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), provided support through the six subclusters: health, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases; education and human resources; gender and development; social welfare and human trafficking; labour and employment; and sport and culture.

67. Cluster members strengthened health-care systems, supported countries affected by Ebola, assisted the implementation of the African Union road map on shared responsibility and global solidarity for the AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria response, supported social protection, skills development and job creation, and addressed human trafficking. A total of 14 United Nations entities implemented some 151 activities.

68. Through the H4+ Partnership, UNFPA, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNICEF, UN-Women, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank jointly contributed to the strengthening of national health-care systems, including through the implementation of the components of national health plans that relate to reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health. H4+ contributed to the training of approximately 10,300 health-care workers and helped to strengthen the capacity of 33 training institutions, including midwifery schools, in 10 countries. In each country, it was clearly demonstrated that the integration of reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health-care services into national health plans yielded better health outcomes. IAEA implemented over 100 national and regional projects in 2015 to improve and increase access to health-care services, in particular by strengthening radiotherapy services, training specialists and procuring equipment and expert services.

69. UNAIDS supported AIDS Watch Africa in reporting to the African Union Summit on the implementation of the African Union road map on shared responsibility and global solidarity for the AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria response and on the implementation of the commitments on health contained in the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases. As a result, African countries extended the road map until 2020 and called for a "catalytic framework" to detail milestones for ending AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in Africa by 2030. In addition, UNAIDS mobilized $7.5 million in 2015 from the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief to provide technical support to more than 85 per cent of the countries in Africa that had submitted concept notes to the Global Fund for grants to address AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. This resulted in the allocation of more than $3 billion in grants.

70. Throughout 2015, UNICEF improved evidence-based programming in adolescent HIV prevention in 11 countries through rapid assessments carried out under the All In initiative to boost access to and uptake of services by adolescents. This resulted in improved epidemiological and programme data analysis, enabling Governments to collate, review and validate data on adolescents, HIV and cross-cutting issues. Efforts to support the demonstration phase of the introduction of the human papilloma virus vaccine for adolescent girls resulted in the completion by Ghana, the Gambia and Senegal of the adolescent health assessment and the

prioritization of adolescent health interventions to be integrated with the introduction of the vaccine in 2016.

71. The World Bank assisted Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in preparing economic recovery and growth strategies and realigned its programmes to match recovery priorities, including the restoration and build-up of the health sectors, increased focus on quick-impact strategic investments in agriculture and the provision of critical infrastructure, including electricity, roads, water and sanitation. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided $309 million in expedited assistance at zero interest rates to the three countries, as well as $95 million in grants for debt relief in 2015 to ease pressures on their balance of payments. UNICEF supported some 13,900 orphaned children and provided mental health and psychosocial support services to more than 315,500 children in the three countries. IAEA strengthened the early detection of dangerous emerging zoonotic diseases, including the Ebola virus disease in wildlife and livestock, under appropriate biosafety conditions.

72. As part of efforts to combat harmful practices against children, UNICEF supported the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage and worked closely with the African Union Commission to celebrate the Day of the African Child across Africa. The theme for the Day of the African Child in 2015 was "25 years after the adoption of the African Children's Charter: Accelerating our collective efforts to end child marriage in Africa". The celebration raised awareness of children's issues.

73. In response to the global migration challenge, in August 2015, UNODC launched a dedicated regional strategy for West Africa for the period 2015-2020 to combat trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. UNODC enhanced the capacity of national task forces, committees and border officials to detect and respond to trafficking cases in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. It also built the capacity of trainers on threats related to human trafficking in Guinea-Bissau. UNODC further supported the drafting of legislation on the trafficking of persons, in Djibouti and Ethiopia. This led Ethiopia to adopt its legislation in July 2015.

74. UNICEF and UNHCR implemented a regional information-sharing protocol for cross-border tracking and family tracing systems as part of a broader response to support unaccompanied and separated children from South Sudan and Burundi, which has resulted in faster and better matching of unaccompanied and separated children with their families/caregivers.

75. On social protection and labour, FAO enhanced the coherence between agriculture and social protection interventions, focusing on Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, by building strong partnerships through the Agriculture and Social Protection in Africa technical reference group.

76. In Senegal, UNIDO promoted youth-led micro, small and medium-sized enterprises through support to the Government in managing youth entrepreneurship and employability initiatives. UNIDO trained 66 staff and professors in supporting young people in seeking employment in companies. It installed six platforms for technical support services in selected regions and formalized 120 entrepreneurial initiatives, leading to the creation of more than 350 jobs. UNIDO also implemented a $1.4 million project in Liberia to promote youth employment in the mining, construction and agricultural sectors. To date, 148 diesel technicians and 84 machine operators have been trained under the project.

77. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been actively involved in the development and implementation of the first five-year priority programme on employment, poverty eradication and inclusive development (2015-2019) of the Ouagadougou+10 Declarations and Plan of Action. ILO has been contributing to four key priority areas, namely, labour migration, labour market governance, social protection, and youth and women's employment.

H. Science and technology

78. The science and technology cluster, co-coordinated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), supported the implementation of Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action, which is built on three pillars, namely, capacity-building, knowledge production and technological innovation. Highlights include 10 activities conducted by five United Nations entities in support of the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024.

79. The World Bank supported the African Union Commission and Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action, notably with respect to the goals of addressing the data gap that currently exists across the continent, rebalancing post-secondary education towards the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics and closing the gender gap in those fields.

80. In collaboration with the African Union and Senegal, WIPO organized the African Ministerial Conference 2015: Intellectual Property for an Emerging Africa, held in Dakar in November 2015. The Conference highlighted the crucial role that the intellectual property system could play in Africa's economic transformation in the context of Agenda 2063 and the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024. Through its technology and innovation support centres, WIPO facilitated access to and the exploitation of technological information for Djibouti and Mauritania in December 2015.

81. UNAIDS contributed to advocacy efforts at the WTO Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) to have the TRIPS waiver on pharmaceuticals for the least developed countries extended until 2033. The resulting agreement allows the least developed countries greater access to affordable essential medicines and paves the way for the establishment of local pharmaceutical capacities in Africa.

82. ITU, under the "Connect a School, Connect a Community" initiative, continued to improve ICT access in rural schools in the Gambia, Lesotho, the Niger, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania. A total of 71 sites were equipped with ICT material and delivered courses for children and teachers, thereby contributing to the socioeconomic development of rural communities.

I. Communication, advocacy and outreach

83. The advocacy and communications cluster, co-chaired by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, continued to undertake advocacy and outreach for NEPAD. Following the adoption by the African Union Summit of Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan, the cluster worked to popularize the priorities

of the new Agenda and mobilize United Nations system support for its implementation.

84. Five United Nations entities conducted 21 activities. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, along with cluster members, advocated for NEPAD and the implementation of Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan in conjunction with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Office strengthened coordination and coherence through partnerships with United Nations entities in joint activities and through the preparation of reports in collaboration with the Interdepartmental Task Force on African Affairs. In July 2015, at the margins of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Office, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, ECA and the United Nations Global Compact, co-organized a high-level side event, at which the participants made policy recommendations aimed at leveraging pension funds for the financing of Africa's infrastructure development. To raise awareness on financing infrastructure development, the Office prepared a study on leveraging such funds to finance infrastructure development in Africa.

85. The Department of Public Information of the Secretariat continued to promote public awareness of the aims and achievements of the NEPAD projects and programmes through the printed and online versions of *Africa Renewal* magazine, the United Nations News Centre, United Nations Radio and Television, the United Nations website and United Nations social media accounts. Between September 2015 and January 2016, some 26 *Africa Renewal* articles were republished, in both English and French, approximately 263 times in 133 different media outlets in 15 countries.

86. In collaboration with the Department of Public Information, ECA, the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and its secretariat, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa organized, from 12 to 16 October 2015 at Headquarters in New York, Africa Week 2015 on the theme "Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Moving from Aspirations to Reality". The Week comprised high-level events on the themes "Achieving regional integration through the Continental Free Trade Area", "Silencing the guns in Africa by 2020", "15 years of the women, peace and security agenda in Africa" and "Youth and development". A press conference and one-on-one interviews were organized for senior officials from NEPAD, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the African Union and the African Peer Review Mechanism. Overall, Africa Week contributed to the mobilization of international support for the African Union's Agenda 2063, while highlighting its synergies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

87. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States provided advocacy and technical support to African landlocked developing countries to promote the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024. The Office has been supporting regional and national efforts to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action, including through the provision of substantive support to African countries in the formulation and adoption of a resolution calling for the mainstreaming of the Programme of Action in 2015.

88. UNCTAD advocated for the leveraging of trade in services as an engine of growth, employment creation and development through the launch of its *Economic Development in Africa Report 2015: Unlocking the potential of Africa's services trade for growth and development* in July 2015.

89. In September 2015, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the private sector advocated for investment opportunities during the African Heads of State and Government Investment Panel. Five African Heads of State engaged with global investors on opportunities in Africa with a view to fast-tracking the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda in Africa, as well as Agenda 2063 and its 10-year implementation plan.

III. Policy issues in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

A. Strengthening of the cluster system and enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

90. During the reporting period, the United Nations system took steps towards enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the cluster system through the reconfiguration of the Regional Coordination Mechanism-Africa clusters and their alignment with Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan.

91. Efforts have also been made towards ensuring the integrated implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, building on the synergies and complementarities to minimize duplication of efforts and avoid unnecessary competition for resources.

92. Regarding the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, the United Nations system and the African Union formulated the United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027, a successor programme to the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union, which will expire in December 2016. The partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027 is anchored on Agenda 2063 and was adopted by the African Union Summit in June 2015.

B. Support to the mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

93. The United Nations system continued to support the implementation of the African Union-NEPAD domestic resource mobilization strategy. UNDP supported the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency in developing a capacity assessment framework and a capacity-strengthening methodology on mutual accountability, with a focus on areas with strong potential for domestic resource mobilization. The assessment tool, together with an implementation plan and a country guidance note, was validated and presented by the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency for adoption by the African Union Summit of June 2015. Countries are now able to develop national action plans for concrete strengthening of their capacity to finance their own development.

94. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa also contributed to improvements in mutual accountability and development effectiveness through the United Nations monitoring mechanism to review commitments made towards Africa's development by African countries and their development partners. The Office has launched the preparation of the second biennial report of the monitoring mechanism, which focuses on the four thematic areas of trade, infrastructure, gender and the empowerment of women, and a conflict-free Africa. Three regional stakeholders' consultative meetings were organized in 2015 to mobilize inputs from a wide spectrum of stakeholders. The report will identify gaps and challenges in the implementation of development commitments in respect of Africa, leading to the full and timely implementation of such commitments.

95. In 2015, World Bank Group lending levels continued the upward trend in assistance to Africa. International Development Association commitments to sub-Saharan Africa reached $10.4 billion, while the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development increased its lending to $1.2 billion and provided $2.4 billion in assistance to North Africa. The International Finance Corporation committed to providing $3.6 billion in new long-term financing in sub-Saharan Africa, provided advice to Governments and private investors on projects worth $47 million in 30 countries and committed to providing $142 million to North African countries. The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency provided guarantees of $235 million to Africa.

96. In July 2015, IMF adopted a number of new initiatives to support the transition of countries to the Sustainable Development Goals by strengthening capacity-building activities in domestic resource mobilization and public spending efficiency; bolstering support to fragile and conflict-affected States; expanding support on infrastructure; focusing analysis on equity, inclusion and gender issues; and dealing with the macroeconomic challenges of climate change. IMF strengthened the financial safety net for low-income countries by increasing access to all its concessional facilities by 50 per cent. As at the end of August 2015, IMF had provided some $107 billion in debt relief to 30 eligible African countries.

C. Cross-cutting issues

97. The United Nations system continued to support the capacity development of African institutions, and the empowerment of women and young people. Thirteen United Nations entities conducted 21 activities.

98. On capacity development, UNDP organized a regional workshop, held in November 2015, to familiarize 36 African countries, representatives from civil society organizations and regional economic communities with the monitoring framework of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. The workshop enhanced the capacity of countries to implement effective development cooperation principles in support of national development goals.

99. In 2015, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs launched a project on enhancing national statistical capacity to measure, monitor, assess and report on progress in achieving post-2015 goals and targets for sustainable development, with the initial implementation starting in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda. IMF provided enhanced support to African countries in the areas of revenue mobilization, public expenditure and debt management, financial stability and the dissemination of basic data.

100. On the empowerment of women, UNFPA and the World Bank implemented the "Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project for Africa " in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and the Niger. The project promoted the empowerment of women and youth development and addressed gender-based violence, early pregnancies and early marriage.

101. In June 2015, UNAIDS and the African Union Commission launched a strategy on empowering young women and adolescent girls and accelerating the end of AIDS in Africa. Three political commitments contained in this strategy were reflected in the Declaration of the African Union on 2015 as the "Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063", namely, enhancing access by women to health care; upholding the sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of African women; and ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

102. FAO, UN-Women, IFAD and WFP have been implementing the five-year programme "Accelerating progress towards the economic empowerment of rural women" in Ethiopia, Liberia, the Niger and Rwanda. The programme strengthened the capacity of Government institutions and other stakeholders to address the rights of women and empower women farmers to enhance their nutrition and food security.

103. In support of the African Year of Human Rights with a Particular Focus on the Rights of Women, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Department of Public Information and ECA co-organized a high-level meeting on the Year during the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, in March 2016. At the meeting, recommendations were made on mainstreaming the theme into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

104. On the empowerment of young people, FAO and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency launched a four-year project aimed at creating decent employment opportunities for young people in rural areas. Through the project, NEPAD and the Agency have supported Benin, Cameroon, Malawi and the Niger in putting in place national action plans on youth employment and skills, targeting 100,000 young people in those countries.

105. In February 2016, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa convened a session to bring the voice of African youth to the Economic and Social Council Youth Forum. The session focused on making the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development a reality while taking into account the African Union's Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan. The young participants recommended investing in the empowerment of young people, addressing youth employment and underemployment, engaging young people in decision-making processes and making young people agents of change rather than a threat.

D. Institutional support

106. During the reporting period, ECA continued to strengthen the capacity of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and the secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism by seconding two senior advisers to provide direct technical support to both institutions. As a result, the Agency submitted a concept note on the

African continental framework on youth empowerment at the twenty-sixth African Union Summit.

107. UNICEF seconded a nutrition specialist, a child protection adviser, a campaign officer and an administrative assistant to the African Union Commission to support the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage. It also provided a number of consultants and produced communication and advocacy materials for the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and for the Campaign. WFP seconded a senior nutritionist to the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency to reinforce its nutrition efforts.

108. UNAIDS, together with WHO, UNIDO, UNDP, UNCTAD and UNFPA, supported the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency in convening the sixth meeting of the Technical Committee for the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa, in November 2015. The Technical Committee reviewed the business plan for the implementation of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan of Africa and identified challenges and opportunities to improve access to medical products and pave the way for the strengthening of the indigenous pharmaceutical industry.

109. ILO strengthened the capacity of African Union Commission and regional economic community officials through ILO training programmes held at the Labour Migration Academy and the Academy on Social Security in Turin, Italy.

E. Challenges and constraints

110. Resource constraints remain a major challenge as far as the full implementation of the business plans of the clusters and capacity-building support is concerned, since there is no specific budget allocation for the activities of the clusters. Inter-cluster collaboration and communication remain delayed.

111. The recent adoption of Agenda 2063 and the United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027 at the continental level and of the 2030 Agenda at the global level, with their respective specific priorities and goals, requires enhanced coordination structures and resources for their implementation in Africa.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

112. The United Nations system continued to provide substantial support to the priority areas of NEPAD at both the global and regional levels, through the nine clusters of the Regional Coordination Mechanism and through the funding of programmes and projects, capacity-building and institution-building activities, policy advisory services, resource mobilization, advocacy and humanitarian assistance.

113. During the review period, the United Nations adopted key development frameworks, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The African Union adopted Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan. Against this background, the United Nations system should support the enhancement of the synergies and

complementarities between the global and regional frameworks as well as the facilitation of the mainstreaming, domestication and implementation of all the development frameworks in Africa.

114. The United Nations system should support the implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2063 and its 10-year implementation plan through harmonization with subregional and regional architectures in Africa, including the regional economic communities, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and the secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism, at the strategic and operational levels. The United Nations system should support the development and implementation of domestic resource mobilization strategies to promote the implementation of Agenda 2063.

115. The United Nations system should continue to support regional integration, the fast-tracking of the Continental Free Trade Area, the implementation of the trade facilitation agreement, and projects under the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, including the Grand Inga Dam project, the high-speed train network, the establishment of a single African air transport network and the development of a Pan-African e-network. The United Nations system should also Support the facilitation of free movement of people across Africa.

116. The United Nations system should enhance its support for the development of productive capacity in Africa, notably by assisting with the development of a commodities strategy, in order to encourage diversification, value addition and the integration of the global value chain within the framework of inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

117. Since 2016 coincides with the African Union's Year of Human Rights with a Particular Focus on the Rights of Women, the United Nations system should strengthen its coordination and enhance its support for the acceleration of the implementation of all commitments relating to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the protection of the rights of women.

118. The United Nations system should continue to develop the capacity and skills of African youth and women, with particular attention to quality education, technical and vocational training, science and technology, including the establishment of an African virtual and e-university.

119. The United Nations system should enhance its support for the implementation of all the pillars of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, in particular in the areas of food security, rural development, climate-smart agriculture, with a view to ensuring environmental sustainability.

120. The United Nations system should strengthen its support towards addressing climate change in Africa by prioritizing adaptation, mitigation through the development of skills, technology (including outer space technology) and the provision of financial and technical resources.

121. The United Nations system should enhance its support for the promotion of governance, peace, security, stability and human rights in Africa, notably by supporting the African Peer Review Mechanism, the "Silencing the guns in Africa by 2020" initiative, eliminating all types of trafficking and protecting human rights, including those of migrants.